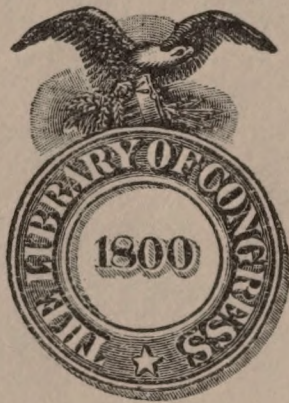


The YOUNG CRUSADERS



GEORGE P. ATWATER



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The Young Crusaders



“THE WHITE TENTS, WHICH UNDER THE GOLDEN MOONLIGHT LOOKED LIKE
MAGIC TEMPLES RAISED BY FAIRY HANDS”

THE YOUNG CRUSADERS

THE STORY OF A BOYS' CAMP

BY
GEORGE P. ATWATER



PARISH PUBLISHERS
AKRON, OHIO
1911

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GEORGE P. ATWATER

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TO
DAVID AND MARY

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THE YOUNG CRUSADERS

CHAPTER I.

OUR BOYS.



A group of boys stood beneath the shadow of a giant maple tree, in front of the High School gate. Their books, whose fresh bindings showed that they had not been long used, were slung over their shoulders in narrow straps. A heavy rubber nose guard, protruding from a coat

pocket, proclaimed the season of the year as fall, the foot ball season. It was the opening week of the Portage High School, and the leading spirits among the upper classmen were deep in the discussion of the activities of the coming year.

"Our team will lack weight this season," said Jimmie Harding, a stocky boy, whose broad shoulders and alert manner gave him

an air of authority that was respected. "We have lost Koons at center and Hanford as guard. No one can take their places. Little Joe will do wonders behind the line if they cannot break through to reach him. And we must have more training. It has been too lax in past years."

"Hilltown will have a strong team this year," spoke up Arthur Miles. "Their best men were all juniors and will all be back in school."

"Portage has never lost a game to Hilltown, and we shall not begin now," said Jimmie in no uncertain tones. "We simply must make every effort to get a good man at center. Have you sized up the freshmen?"

This question was addressed to a tall, well built boy, who had taken no part in the discussion, but had listened with the greatest interest. Tom Warren was manager of the team, and upon him rested the heaviest burden, that of selecting new material.

"Yes;" was his slow reply, "and I am not sure but that we can find a center there."

"Who is it?" Half a dozen eager voices asked the question, and the group instinctively drew a step nearer to the speaker.

"Have you noticed that fellow who walks in from the country each morning? He seems

somewhat older than the other freshmen, and he is large, and no doubt strong. His four-mile walk is good training. He might be the very man after he learned the game. His name is Durr."

"I know him," said Miles. "I was at his father's farm for a day this summer. I saw him pitching bundles of wheat, and they fairly flew to the top of the loaded wagon. He is as strong as an ox and much more spry," he added. "But how about training?"

"I have had a talk with the new teacher, Mr. Kinsman," said Arthur Miles. "He has been out of college but a few years and he played on the team. He offered to help if we wanted him."

All looked at Jimmie. He was the team captain, and his approval or disapproval would mean much.

"Of course we want him if he played on a college team. He is a pretty good teacher and he ought to be able to help whip the new hands into shape."

It was just at this moment that the High School door opened and the man under discussion came forth, and started down the walk. Mr. Kinsman was a quiet, determined looking man, with a genial smile, but a firm demeanor. Jimmie hastened to him.

"Mr. Kinsman," he said politely, "the boys are talking over the foot ball team. Would you be willing to join us for a few minutes?"

"Of course!" was the cordial reply, and he took his way toward the group.

For half an hour the discussion went on. Mr. Kinsman wisely did not say much, but he answered many questions, and gave several opinions. He took mental note, likewise, of the boys, and their various characteristics. Especially did he observe the reserve of Tom Warren, who evidently took the responsibility of manager very seriously. It was Jimmie Harding who displayed the greatest enthusiasm, while Art Miles proposed the questions and difficulties. Mr. Kinsman had noticed Durr, too, and said that he thought that he might become, with training, an excellent center rush.

While the discussion was going on, another boy came running from the school, throwing his hat into the air. It was Joe Russell, whom everyone called Little Joe, the inventive genius of the school, irrepressible and good humored. Nearly every day he was detained for some harmless prank, or some reply that was not in the books. He joined the group, slapping Jimmie on the back, and not noticing, for a moment, the presence of the teacher, he blurted out

"That teacher of geography has no imagination. He asked me the largest body of water in Maine, and I couldn't think of Moosehead Lake, so I said Havana Harbor. I thought of that in ten seconds but he gave me half an hour to forget it. Beg pardon, sir," spying Mr. Kinsman, who was smiling. "I didn't see you here," and Joe was inclined to retire into the background. But Mr. Kinsman broke into a hearty laugh, and Joe took courage. "It was all right," he continued, "but I could forget a great many things in half an hour. It was an awful risk for my general information. Two hours spent in forgetting would leave me as innocent as a child," and Joe made a pathetic face that convulsed his friends.

"Come, Joe," said Jimmie, "and hear the result of our confab. We shall let you into the secret that the weakest point on our team is quarter-back."

As this was Joe's position, a look of dismay crept into his face, and the color began to rise.

"Oh, pshaw!" was Warren's quick comment, on seeing Joe's evident distress. "We don't mean that. Jimmie is trying his clumsy wit."

"I mean," said the matter-of-fact Jimmie, "that if you are to be kept in every day, you will not have time to practice."

"Then I must be good," said the satisfied Joe. "I will be as good as Tom and write on my slate, 'Little Joe loves his teacher.'"

Mr. Kinsman then interrupted, "How would you like to come to my rooms on Friday night and talk over the whole situation?"

For a moment no one spoke. It was a new idea to them. No teacher had ever suggested that before. But Tom Warren realized the value of such a conference, and answered for the group.

"I think, sir, that we should enjoy it very much, and I shall be glad to go."

The others at once accepted the invitation. Mr. Kinsman said, "At half past seven, then, on Friday. And now I must go. Goodbye."

"Goodbye, sir," chimed a dozen voices at once.

"He's all right," said Harding. "I believe he wants our team to do its best. We ought to give him a chance to tell us what he knows of football. Come on, Art. You have asked less than a thousand questions and you ought to be hungry. It's nearly supper time."

The group broke up, Harding and Miles going together in deep discussion, while Warren and Little Joe started in another direction.

"Tom," said Joe. "How would you like to take a ride in the clouds?"

Tom looked at Joe, as if to learn what joke he was about to spring. But Joe seemed serious.

"What do you mean, Joe?"

"I mean," answered Joe, "that I am building an airship."

"An airship," said the astonished Tom. "Where in the world is it?"

"I'm assembling it in my uncle's attic. You know his old house? Well, it has the best attic that ever a house had, and he lets me putter about in it. I have been working now for two months, and I need help. If you want to go in with me, and keep it a secret, we may surprise this town some fine day. I am the great original bird man of Portage. I intend to fly over the High School some day during the noon recess and startle those old fellows who keep me in. My real name is Wilbur Orville Russell," said the irrepressible Joe, dancing upon the sidewalk for a step or two.

Tom was impressed. "I'll step over and look at your airship if you really have one. And I'll keep your secret, for no one would believe me if I told it."

"Come right along," said Joe. "We'll go up there now."

The two boys hastened to the fine colonial house, occupied by Colonel Russell, Joe's uncle.

Colonel Russell was a man who was much

respected in Portage both for his character and for his ability.

He was a member of a good family, and his home had been occupied by a Russell for several generations. The attic to which the boys hastened was a very large one and was filled with chests and boxes, with furniture of by-gone days and with all those relics among which youthful curiosity likes to pry. In the center of the attic stood a half completed arrangement of frames covered with paper and fairly bristling with wires and levers.

Joe at once began to explain. "I have no engine yet, but I shall get one if Uncle Russell becomes interested. The frames are now covered with paper. This is really a model. When I have this machine all ready to assemble, I shall move to the carriage house, get the engine and the silk and we shall have it ready to fly in no time. What do you think?"

Tom looked at it judiciously. "Ever hear of Darius Green?" he asked at length.

"Don't think I have," said Joe.

"He was the most famous aviator before the Wrights thought of building an airship."

"Is that so," said Joe, "then I'll call my 'plane' after him. Daniel Green, did you say? That's a good name. I'll look him up in the encyclopedia."

Tom laughed. "His name was Darius, not Daniel, and you will find him in Trowbridge's poetry. Look him up there."

"I'll do that," asserted Joe. "Uncle has almost every book of poetry that was ever written. He says history tells the things that are so, and poetry the things that aren't so, but ought to be. Say, why isn't this Green fellow in history?"

"You look him up and you will find out," replied Tom. "I must not stay now but I will come over on Saturday and look at this airship again. It might fly," he added, "but you surely won't stand on ceremony and be so polite as to insist on my having the first ride?"

Joe looked at him doubtfully. "No, I'll take a spin or two myself, to see how it goes."

The boys soon left the house and went to their homes, Joe in deep thought about his airship and Tom trying to solve the problem of the football team.

Tom Warren was a boy to be counted on. Steadily he had developed until many a responsibility of the kind boys assume rested on his shoulders. He had the qualities of a leader; self-reliance, good judgment and uprightness. His bosom friend, Joe Russell, was a boy whose active mind and sturdy body entered into every phase of boy life with joy. His was the creative

mind, and his resourcefulness was a marked quality of his character. Both were high-minded, generous-hearted boys whose friendship was deep and abiding.

The town of Portage was beautifully situated on the hills at the head of a great winding valley. Its people, progressive and cultured, were alert to every opportunity for growth and development. The boys of the Portage High School were the kind of American boys that welcome the chance to act and grow. Mr. Kinsman realized this, and his plans for the boys sprang from a desire to provide by organization that which the boys singly or in small groups could not attain. He was well content with the start he had made.

CHAPTER II.

THE MYSTERY.



Promptly at half past seven the members of the team who had gathered at Warren's home near by made their way to the house where Mr. Kinsman had his rooms. He was waiting for them on the porch and greeted each boy in turn. There was a full dozen of them.

Warren, Harding, Miles and Russell were there, of course. There was Dick Brewer, a light haired boy, leader of the High School Glee Club; Charlie Davis, called "Lucky" Davis, because of his unvarying good fortune; Ted Potter or "Happy" Potter, who always seemed in good humor and was a peacemaker in many a threatening quarrel; Leo Inwood, a capable looking boy, who had the reputation of doing everything well; and a red headed boy, who rejoiced in the name of Patrick McGuire. The others were interested members of the team.

Mr. Kinsman conducted them to his large sitting room where a sufficient number of chairs had been arranged. For a few minutes the boys sat almost silent, absorbed in their surroundings. It was a most interesting room. Upon one side a large low bookcase occupied the space between the windows. It was well filled, not alone with the Latin books and arithmetics they expected to see in a teacher's room, but with the old favorites of boyhood. "Robinson Crusoe" and "The Story of A Bad Boy" and "Phaeton Rogers" seemed quite at home in their well worn clothes.

Above the case were many pictures, one of an English Cathedral, another of the Roman Forum, and still another of St. Mark's Square in Venice, with Mr. Kinsman himself in the foreground, feeding the pigeons. This was evidently an enlarged kodak. A camera rested upon the case. In one corner of the room was a pair of oars, with beautifully shaped spoon blades and long slender looms. Upon the wall hung a tennis racket. Pictures of college scenes and fraternity groups were upon the other walls. It was the room of a man who loved games and out door life.

Pat McGuire was the first to turn his attention from the room to their host.

"Sure, Mr. Kinsman, how did ye find time to

do all those things," pointing to the oars and the racket, "and make a teacher of yourself, too?"

Everyone laughed. Pat was an ardent lover of sports but not of books.

"Well, Pat," answered Mr. Kinsman, "I had to do a little studying in winter, in order to pass away the time, when I could not row."

"But couldn't ye skate?" asked Pat, so seriously that everyone laughed again and Mr. Kinsman himself most of all. This made the boys feel more easy, and every tongue began to wag.

After a minute Mr. Kinsman said:

"Now, boys, we have some serious matters to discuss, and I propose we do it in a business-like way. Let Tom Warren be chairman of this meeting, and when we speak we must address the chair and be recognized. Here is your place, Mr. Chairman," and he gave up his seat before his flat-topped desk. "It is all in your hands."

No one spoke for a moment as the chairman took his place. Then Mr. Kinsman arose saying:

"Mr. Chairman."

"Mr. Kinsman," responded the chairman, politely, "You have the floor, sir."

"Gentlemen," began the teacher, and every boy sat up straight at this word. "Our purpose

in meeting tonight is to discuss the football situation. There are several places to be filled and we ought to have some regular system of training and practice. I propose that each one, in turn, give us his views and then, that we have a general discussion. After that we may ask the manager, Mr. Warren, and the captain, Mr. Harding, to draw up a set of rules and present them to the team next Monday. We can agree to abide by such rules."

The discussion that followed was vigorous and to the point. Nine o'clock came before they realized it. Mr. Kinsman suggested a recess of fifteen minutes and then adjournment. All agreed, though mystified by the meaning of a recess. It was soon apparent why this was done. Excusing himself for a moment, Mr. Kinsman left the room, taking Little Joe with him. He soon reappeared with a large plate of doughnuts and a great pitcher of lemonade. Little Joe's face, covered with smiles, appeared behind a tray of glasses. They partook without urging. Everyone expressed his thanks, but Pat thought some further motion was necessary. He arose. Flourishing a glass in one hand and clinging to a doughnut with the other, he addressed the Chair.

"Mr. Chairman, and gentlemen, I think we ought to pass a vote of thanks to the teacher,

for letting us come and litter up his room and for providing this special treat. It's a long time since our beloved faculty has recognized that we are partly stomach and not all brains. (Applause.) To be sure our brains need the most exercise as our stomachs have been our constant concern since we were infants. I move we thank Mr. Kinsman by a standing vote."

It was done with loud hand clapping.

"That's all right, boys," said the pleased teacher, "you are welcome here any time. And now it is time to adjourn. Good-night, and good luck to the team."

As the boys started for home, Joe Russell seized Tom's arm, and whispered, "Come up early tomorrow morning, Tom; I have something to show you. It's great."

"Another airship?" asked Tom.

"No! something better than that. A mystery."

"A mystery? Where did you catch it? You must be careful. This is not the open season for mysteries."

"You'll stop your joking, Tom, when you see this one. It's a real grown-up mystery, with, maybe, something valuable at the end. Will you come?"

"Perhaps I can manage tomorrow morning. Good-night, Joe."

Slowly Tom made his way to his house,

thinking of the evening's conference. It meant much good for the Portage team. Joe's mystery then came into his mind.

"I'll go and see what it is," was his determination.

Next morning, after breakfast, Tom went to Joe's home. Joe met him at the gate.

"Come on to Uncle Russell's," was his hasty greeting. Joe was evidently full of suppressed excitement. He hardly said a word as they hurried along the street to his uncle's home. Entering by a side door Joe called out, "We're here," and, without waiting for a reply, he led Tom to the large old attic.

"Where's your mystery?" said Tom, looking around. "I hope you have him chained."

But Joe was too absorbed to be teased. He went to a curious old chest and lifted the lid. A large tin box was in the upper tray. The rest of the chest was filled with tools, bits of cord and leather, and with all the necessary material of a juvenile builder of airships.

"Uncle let me use this chest and box," he said, lifting the box out of the chest. "I have been keeping nails and screws in it. Yesterday I found that the box had a false bottom. I tried to put a spool of wire in it. It seemed big enough, from the outside, but the spool would not go in. That is how I discovered it. After

a lot of hard work I got the false bottom out and I found this big envelope. It has the name "Ezra Russell" on it. That was my Uncle Ezra who died about ten years ago. I have often heard Uncle Russell talk about him. I took the box to Uncle Russell, but he was not interested, and only said that the attic was filled with Uncle Ezra's belongings, and I was welcome to the box and anything in it. So I opened this envelope and this is what I found."

Tom was all attention by this time. He watched Joe pull a piece of yellow paper from the envelope. He took it and looked at it. It was about six inches long and three inches wide. A sketch of a tree, and a group of letters covered one side. The other side was blank. The design was like this:



abagbahlbbtalbfbbnb
 axaabp _____
 baxaarababarabbsaa
 tabbxaaarasbaabpaaa
 bxtarbaraxat-arbaarab
 xbarbaxaaabtbattbasar
 aaarbarbasbabaz

Tom looked at it a long time.

"It's a mystery all right, but any one can make a mystery of that sort."

"I know that," said Joe, "but you didn't know Uncle Ezra. I have heard father talk of him many times. He was a man who did unusual things, but he was a serious man and would not draw things of this sort without some purpose. That means something, and I am going to try to find out what it means. This was his box for valuable papers. They were removed after his death, probably, except this."

"What do you think it means," said Tom.

"I think that he buried something near a big tree and that it was north of the tree. That circle is a sort of compass."

"That looks reasonable," admitted Tom, "but where is the tree?"

"The letters below tell us that. They are a cryptogram. Do you remember a story about a cryptogram in the library? If we could find the key, it would be easy as print."

Tom studied the letters again. "We can try," he said, "but I confess I do not know how to begin. There seem to be a good many a's and b's."

"I am going to the bottom of this if it takes all winter," said the determined Joe. "You make a copy and study over it" Then he

added with a smile, "I do not see how I can study much between this and our airship. I'll be kept in worse than ever. But we are on the road to riches, Tom. Make that out and it's half yours," he added generously, as if it were a great treasure, all his own and ready to be carried off.

"I am with you," said the now enthusiastic Tom, "and if we make out this thing we'll go to Europe for a year, and then we'll come back and tackle Captain Kidd's treasure. I must leave now, and do some errands for mother. I'll see you this afternoon."

CHAPTER III.

THE YOUNG CRUSADERS.



On Saturday afternoon Tom and Joe puzzled long over the mysterious paper. They gained no clue to its meaning however. They determined not to tell anyone of it, at least for the time being, but to make every effort to guess the key to the mysterious writing.

As time went they thought less about it as they were absorbed in the activities of the High School. Every day the faithful football team practiced on the school grounds. Mr. Kinsman had been appointed coach. The boys gained strength and skill under his wise direction. Several games were played with other teams from neighboring villages. All were victories for Portage. The new center rush, Durr, proved a tower of strength and Russell, Harding, Davis and Miles, behind the line, played like a machine.

The great game, that with Hilltown, was

played on Thanksgiving Day. It was a struggle from beginning to end. Neither side scored in the first half. Between the halves, Mr. Kinsman had an earnest talk with the backs. They realized that they must save the day for Portage.

After about ten minutes of play in the second half, the ball was within thirty yards of the Portage goal. It was Portage's ball, but the situation was threatening as Hilltown was playing strongly. Time was called frequently, because the players were nearly exhausted, and in the fierce struggle a boy was often "winded."

Durr, at the signal, snapped the ball. Russell like a flash handed it to Harding, who made a dash around right end. But it was useless. Hilltown downed him before he gained a yard. But one boy did not rise at once from the scrimmage and time was called. It was Russell. As he lay on the ground and the others bent over him, Davis and Harding slipped into their sweaters which the substitutes had ready for them. Russell soon recovered and play was resumed. But the half-backs did not take off their sweaters.

The signal was again given. Miles, the full-back, dropped back as if for a kick.

Durr snapped the ball, and Joe received it skilfully. Instead of passing it to Miles, how-

ever, he passed it to Harding, at left half-back. Harding ran behind Davis, halted a moment, and protected by Joe, who had covered Davis, jerked the ball under Davis' sweater, at the small of his back.

Harding then, with head down, and his arms clasped as if he had the ball, bucked the line between center and guard. The whole Hilltown formation was soon on top of him. In the meantime, Davis, his arms free, ran around right end and sped down the field. He was the fastest man on the team. He cleared the nearest boys who did not suspect the trick. The Hilltown captain saw the speeding man, and saw the bulging sweater. He called to his full-back, Dunlap:

"Stop him. Stop him—he has the ball."

It was now a duel between Davis and the full-back. Davis went like the wind. Dunlap crouching awaited him. As Davis approached Dunlap prepared to tackle. His tense form was drawn ready for a mighty spring. As Dunlap dived at him, Davis halted just a moment. Dunlap's tackle fell short. With a great bound, Davis hurdled over Dunlap's body and sped on, making a touch down.

Excitement reigned among players and spectators. The crowds went wild with enthusiasm. Hilltown protested the play, but the um-

pire ruled that Davis could carry the ball any way he preferred. The play stood.

This demoralized Hilltown and Portage had no difficulty in scoring several more touch downs, before time was called.

The great game ended 16 to 0 in favor of Portage and the jubilant boys swarmed to Mr. Kinsman and thanked him again and again for coaching their team to victory.

There was a team supper the following night. Mr. Kinsman was in the chair, and after supper called upon the boys for speeches. They responded with great enthusiasm. When all had spoken, Mr. Kinsman said:

"It seems too bad that we should break up this good comradeship now that the season is over. I have something to propose to you. It is that we form a club, which shall hold regular meetings during the winter. I am sure that I can get permission for us to meet in the basement of the school. If this club is a success we might arrange to have a camp next summer, near Portage. If you care to do it I shall be willing to help."

The idea met with instant approval. All were ready to talk at once. The questions began to fly thick and fast. How many would be in it? What would the club be called? What would the members do during the win-

ter? Where would the camp be? What officers would be needed?

Finally Tom Warren arose. His level head was respected by the boys, and all listened.

"Mr. Chairman," Tom began, "I move that the Chair appoint a committee of three to consult with you, and to report plans for the organization of a club next Friday night."

The motion was seconded by a half dozen. Then the loud voice of Pat, ever known in the class debates as a ready speaker, was heard above the din.

"Mr. Chairman, I protest. Why should we stand on tip-toe of expectation and wait until next Friday for ye's to get together and tell us what we want to know sooner? It would interfere with the orderly progress of our studies, and be like postponing Christmas until the Fourth of July. I move to amend, that the honorable committee report tomorrow night to the long suffering rabble."

A chorus of cheers greeted this amendment. It was carried, as well as the original motion. Mr. Kinsman appointed Warren, Miles and Inwood on the committee. They agreed to meet Saturday morning, and adjourned.

On Saturday night the eager boys gathered promptly to hear the report. It had been carefully thought out, and Tom read it.

"We suggest that we organize a military company, under direction of Mr. Kinsman, who shall be known as Warden. The officers shall be elected by the members and the meetings shall be once a week. At these meetings we shall conduct the usual business of the club, and then drill. Any boy over thirteen in High School may be proposed for membership, and the members shall vote on his name. We ought to get uniforms as soon as possible and also plan for a camp. In order to get started we propose that we agree to invite fifteen boys to join us and on next Friday have a regular meeting with election of officers. After that we can plan for future growth."

The report was accepted unanimously. Very rapidly fifteen new names were proposed. As the boys proposed were all well known to the group they were elected without difficulty. The committee was instructed to notify each boy and to prepare for the meeting.

During the following week little else was talked of in the school. Already places for camps were suggested, and uniforms discussed.

When Friday night came a crowd of boys waited at the door of the school for Mr. Kinsman. When he finally appeared and produced the key, which admitted them into the basement room, there was suppressed excitement.

After unlocking the door he stood in the entrance and raised his hand for silence. Every boy listened.

"You have intrusted the committee with starting the club," he said. "Now we wish to do things in an orderly way. We shall admit one boy at a time, and after he has agreed to keep the rules which we may adopt, we shall assign him a place, and admit another. Pat McGuire will act as guard here, and Inwood will conduct the boys. Davis, you will come first."

When Davis entered the room, with Inwood tightly clutching his arm, he was startled. The bare room had been transformed. At one end, upon a little platform, stood a long table, with three chairs back of it. An American flag hung upon the wall, back of the chairs. At the other end of the room was a large chair with a small table. At each side also was a similar table and a chair. The remaining chairs stretched from the platform, in a diagonal line, to the small side tables and then to the one at the end, thus forming a diamond. In the center was a high desk, with a Bible upon it, and two swords.

Inwood conducted Davis to this central desk, and Mr. Kinsman, who sat on the platform, asked this question:

"Do you, Charles Davis, agree to be loyal to this organization?" "I do," was his reply, and he was conducted to a seat in the rows of chairs forming the diamond. Each boy in turn was brought in by Inwood and each pledged himself to loyalty. After all were in, Mr. Kinsman said:

"We will now elect officers for one year. You need a Captain, First Lieutenant, Second Lieutenant, Third Lieutenant, First Sergeant, Standard-bearer, Quarter-master and Bugler. We shall need also a Secretary and Treasurer. I have paper ready and we shall prepare to vote for Captain."

The election for Captain proceeded with rapidity. Warren and Harding were nominated and Warren was elected. Harding was the first to congratulate him. The Captain was told that his station was at the right of the Warden. Warren took his place and Mr. Kinsman placed a gavel in his hands, saying:

"You are now in charge of the meeting. Hereafter you will conduct every meeting of our organization."

The other elections followed quickly. Harding was elected Lieutenant, and took the chair at the opposite end of the room from the Captain. There was a second chair at this table, but it remained unoccupied for the time. As

each officer was elected a place was found for him. Mr. Kinsman then read the list of officers as follows:

Warden, Mr. Kinsman,
Captain, Tom Warren,
1st Lieut., James Harding,
2nd Lieut., Arthur Miles,
3rd Lieut., Ted Potter,
1st Sergeant, Dick Brewer,

Standard-bearer, Emil Durr,
Quarter-master, Leo Inwood,
Bugler, Joe Russell,
Secretary, Pat McGuire,
Treasurer, Ralph Underwood.

This orderly process made a deep impression on the boys. It was apparent that it was to be a serious organization and was to attain results. Mr. Kinsman then made a short address, saying that there was much to be done. They must have a name, a Constitution and By Laws, and a uniform. There must be a form of opening and closing and of initiation. They would want new members shortly and they must settle the question of dues. All could not be done at once, but a good start had been made. They must be well drilled, too. Here he paused and waited a moment before proceeding.

"I may have overstepped my authority but in the interest of the club I have asked the assistance of a friend, to act as the Second Warden of our club and to assist at the drill. He fortunately has had much experience and is willing to help us. He is already in the building, in the office above, and awaits a summons

from us. His place is with the First Lieutenant, in that vacant chair. I suggest that the Captain request Lieutenant Harding to go to the office and conduct him to his place.

There was a moment of silence. Then Pat, the ever ready, the good natured and popular Pat, arose. "Mr. Chairman, or I mean Mr. Captain, we have trusted Mr. Kinsman so far, and we may trust him now. He has failed to mention the gentleman's name, but I move that we welcome him as the Second Warden, even though he proves to be our greatest military hero, the man who by his writings has brought sorrow to the hearts of school boys, Julius Caesar. Show us to him."

The motion was carried with enthusiastic voices. Harding retired and, a few moments later, ushered into the room the least expected man of all, one known to all the town for his ability and generosity, Frank Sumner.

Frank Sumner had been at a military school for many years. He had risen to the highest place in the student corps. Later he had studied law, and was now practicing in Portage. He was a man of rare ability in accomplishing his purposes, and many a local enterprise had owed its success to him. His entrance into the basement room of the High School, to help a group of boys in their en-

deavor to organize their club, was a characteristic act. He was greeted with cheers that would have startled the ghosts of former teachers, were they wandering about those halls, where they had in their days taught boys to whisper and to make no noise.

The question of the name of the club was then discussed. Many names were suggested. After they had been considered carefully, Captain Warren turned to Mr. Kinsman, saying:

"We would like you to propose a name."

Mr. Kinsman arose.

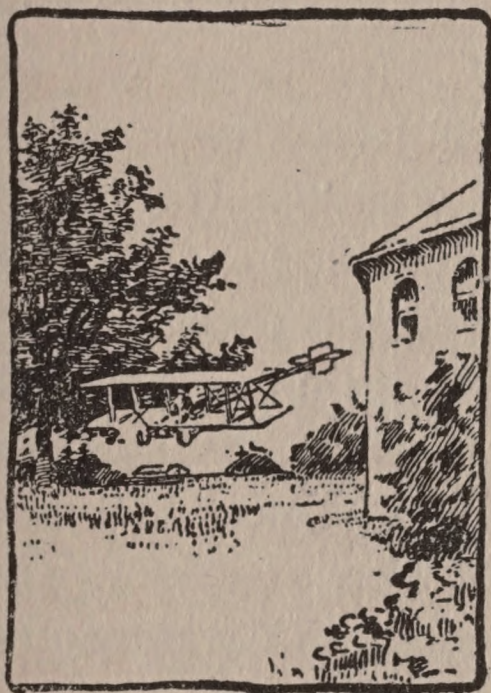
"Mr. Chairman, I have given much thought to the question of a name. It should express the purpose of our organization. We are not planning to have good times merely, but to do some good. As the Crusaders of old were in a holy war, and as their ideal involved the upholding of righteousness, the protection of the weak, the relief of the poor, so we today must stand for the best ideals of boyhood, and must prepare to grow into strong men.

"I propose that we adopt the name 'The Young Crusaders' and that we take the cross as our emblem. Our badges can be a cross with the letters Y C on either side of it."

This met with instant approval. By a standing vote, which was unanimous, the club of boys adopted the name "The Young Crusaders."

CHAPTER IV.

THE GLIDER.



The next morning Tom Warren went early to Joe Russell's house. It was a clear, frosty morning, such as causes a boy's spirits to rise and his whole body to crave vigorous activity. Tom found Joe already in the yard impatiently waiting.

"Come along to Uncle Russell's," said Joe. "I have had a new idea about that airship. I have had a talk with Uncle Russell, and he does not think I ought to waste money buying an engine. In fact he told me he did not want his home to be burned down or blown up, and I cannot have an engine here."

"Not much of an airship without an engine, Joe," remarked Tom. "What will you do now? Why not try flying it with kites?"

"Stop your fooling, Tom," answered Joe. "You will see."

The boys, on their arrival, went to the attic

as usual. The house seemed otherwise deserted. Joe explained that Uncle Russell had gone off for several days and that only one servant was about. The airship was not to be seen.

"Where is it, Joe," asked Tom, looking about.

"On the roof," was the cool response.

Joe led the way to a short ladder, leading to a trap door. This he pushed open, and with Tom following he stepped out on to a flat portion of the roof, from which an inclined section sloped to the eaves. Toward the rear the slope was long and gradual. Upon the roof were the various parts of the airship. The paper had been removed from the frames and a stout muslin substituted.

"Tom," said Joe, "this is no longer an airship. It is a 'glider.' A 'glider' is an air sailing craft, propelled by gravity. When the planes are turned properly it will make a descent, in a long slant, from an elevated point to the ground. If we can get this thing together, we can slide down this roof and into the yard in great style."

Tom stood without speaking for several minutes, while Joe began to arrange the scattered portions of his glider. Finally Tom asked:

"How are you going to get here for a second trip, if you live to make one?"

"I do not intend to come back here. I'll keep the machine in the carriage house, and use it from the hill."

The hill was a large elevation on the bank of the river near Colonel Russell's. It was rather abrupt on the side toward the river, but had a long grassy slope on the other side. This slope ended sharply, however, and the hill dipped into a meadow.

"Maybe it will do," said the doubtful Tom.

All day long the boys worked to assemble the scattered parts of the glider. It was a bright, crisp, winter day, very mild, and there was no snow. When Saturday night came the task was about finished and the queer looking object, like a great bird, stood upon the roof of the house. It was near the edge of a long slope, that led toward the yard in the rear of the house. A wide, open lawn, stretching to the carriage house, was Joe's proposed landing place when he should make the descent. Joe finally seated himself in the little seat of the glider and looked about as proudly as if he were sailing around the Statue of Liberty in New York harbor. Tom, too, had caught the enthusiasm of the moment and his eyes sparkled.

The glider had been skilfully made, and as it rested upon its little wheels, which Joe had taken from a small bicycle, it had an appearance of gracefulness, as well as strength and rigidity. But would it be safe and would it fly?

"It is too late to try it tonight," said Joe, "but I shall make a flight the first thing Monday morning. Suppose we stay here tomorrow night. There is a little bed room off the attic and I know Uncle Russell will not object."

So it was agreed. On Sunday afternoon the boys went to the house, having obtained the consent of their parents, prepared to camp out in the attic. They brought a lunch with them. To pass the hours they tried again and again to solve the mystery of Uncle Ezra's parchment. They were no nearer a solution than when they began. Soon after supper the lone servant below said that she was going away for the night and cautioned the boys to light no matches.

The evening was passed in reading and in discussing the plans for the "glider." It would be great sport to go rolling down the hill. It would be better than coasting for they would not have to wait for snow. They hardly realized that they were alone in the great house.

At bed time they crept into the little room and undressed with no light except from the radiance of a clear star-lit sky.

"This is a pretty lonely place for us," said Joe a little wistfully, as he looked out over the roofs of the sleeping town.

"Go to sleep," commanded his tired companion. "You will need your nerve to run the glider off that roof."

A little after the clock in the church tower struck twelve, the restless Joe heard a voice close to his ear.

"Joe! Joe! Make no noise! Wake up!" Joe started to call out but Tom firmly placed his hand over his mouth. "Be quiet."

Joe was now wide awake. He motioned to Tom to release his hand and asked in an excited whisper, "What is the matter?"

"Listen," answered Tom. "I have heard some strange sounds. Is the door leading to the attic locked?"

"Yes," replied Joe, "from this side. What have you heard?"

"It sounded as if someone had raised a window below."

"Let us look out."

Both boys crept to the window. From this attic room they commanded a view of the wing of the house. Nothing could be seen or heard.

Then a slight scraping drew their eyes to the kitchen window on the ground floor. It was in the shadow so they could at first see nothing. Soon they distinguished the slight movement of a dark object below the window.

"Burglars," said Tom in a low whisper.

Joe's voice betrayed his excitement as he said "What shall we do?"

In a moment they saw the white muslin curtain of the window separate and fall together again. This happened a second time.

"Two have gone in," said Tom. "How can we give the alarm? Where is the telephone?"

"In the library, but we cannot reach it. We cannot get down, either. If we could only get Jerry."

Jerry was the coachman, who slept in the stable.

"They will go to the front of the house," said Tom. "Put on your clothes and follow me."

"You are not going down, Tom?" said Joe.

"No, I am going up."

The boys dressed quickly and quietly.

Tom led the way and crept across the attic to the stairway leading to the roof. Joe followed in a daze as to Tom's intentions.

"What are you going to do, Tom?" asked Joe, as they mounted the stairs.

Tom answered but one word.

"The glider."

This word acted upon Joe like magic. His own airship, the work of his hands, stood there ready to do its work. Joe became, in a moment, the strong, skilful boy of resources. Forgetting the very existence of the men below, he rushed to the chimney and untied the ropes that anchored the glider.

"I will do it," he said in a voice of authority. "I'll land at the carriage house, and wake Jerry. We will telephone from there. They can't get you, Tom, if you stay here."

Rapidly he made his preparations. "They will not hear nor see, as they have no doubt gone into the front of the house. They must have known no one was here."

Joe got into the seat and tried the levers. The dipping planes moved in response to his touch. He gave one long look, adjusted the planes and said with greatest confidence, "Push her off, Tom."

Tom hesitated. "I'll never forgive myself if you are killed, Joe."

"I'll get down all right; you push off."

The light machine was easily pushed to the edge of the long sloping roof. Joe's face could not be clearly seen in the dark, but his whole body was tense and alert. Noiselessly

the glider, like a phantom bird, rolled down over the roof. It was going faster and faster. Tom, his heart in his mouth, watched with straining eyes. The white planes were clearly visible. Now it was at the very edge. The glider gave a little convulsive movement, as if it would fall, and then Tom saw the dipping planes move. Joe had kept his head and his nerve. It was not falling. It was going on, but more slowly. Had it enough momentum? Tom could scarcely believe his eyes when he saw the glider make a long leap in the darkness, on a gentle slant, careening a little to one side, and then with a slight shudder, strike the ground noiselessly and roll right to the very door of the carriage house. It was a success. He had forgotten all about the burglars. Now it came to him again, as he waited. He saw Joe's dark form against the white of the carriage house, creeping toward the door. The door slowly opened, and Tom knew that Joe was inside.

When Joe was spinning down the roof a hundred thoughts were rushing through his mind. It was so far to the ground. It seemed to take an hour for the machine to clear the edge. Quickly he pulled the lever and the glider rushed him through space with a swinging motion that fairly made him shout with ex-

citement. He could scarcely believe that he had done it when the wheels touched the smooth lawn, and he was rolled on toward the carriage house.

He never hesitated a moment. Creeping to the door, he slipped in and found the sleeping Jerry in the stable adjoining. Quickly they rushed to the telephone, and called up the police station.

An impatient voice said "Hello." Joe gathered himself together and said:

"There are burglars in Colonel Russell's house. They crawled in a kitchen window. There is no one at home, but Tom Warren and I were sleeping in the attic and heard them."

"Who are you?" came the gruff question.

"I am Joe Russell, Colonel Russell's nephew."

"Where are you?"

"At the stable."

"How did you get there?"

Joe hesitated. If he told all the facts, the officer would not believe him.

"I came down the roof."

"Well, we will send a patrolman over to look around."

This aroused Joe. "See here. There are two burglars in that house. If you send one

patrolman they will get away. If you do not get those men after this warning, my Uncle Russell will make it warm for you."

"So you think you heard burglars, sonny. Better not lie awake nights. I will send a man. Meet him at the front gate."

Joe hung up the receiver and turned to Jerry.

"Jerry, that officer thinks I am dreaming. He is going to send out one man. That means that we must capture these men ourselves. You meet the patrolman at the gate and hold him there. I'll be back in ten minutes. Those burglars will not hurry. They know the house is empty. Have you a gun?"

Jerry, a strapping Irishman, eager for excitement, stepped to a cupboard and took from it a shining revolver. "I am with you, Joe," was all he said.

Joe ran quickly into a side street and to Mr. Kinsman's house, but a short distance away. He threw several pebbles at his windows and called his name. Mr. Kinsman appeared at the window and Joe hurriedly explained the situation. In an incredibly short time, Mr. Kinsman was down stairs with a shot gun under his arm.

"Now, Joe; you are the boss; what are we to do?"

"Come to the front gate at Uncle Russell's house."

They hurried there and found Jerry and the patrolman. The officer was impressed by the presence of the armed men and was about to return to the police station for more help. But Jerry said, "If you go back, Pat McConnell, I'll brand you before this whole town as a coward. If two Irishmen and two scholars cannot capture a whole flock of burglars, then we are no good. Come on."

"Wait," said Mr. Kinsman, "Joe, where are the valuables?"

"In the library in a safe."

"That is where the burglars are then. Don't you suppose they have a lookout in the grounds?"

"Maybe so," said the officer, "but more likely they have opened the front door and will depend upon no one disturbing them."

"Then we will try to surprise them. Where is the library?"

"Off the front hall. It has two doors."

"Do you know where the light switch is?"

"Yes, near the door in the hall."

"Take off your shoes and come on."

They did so. Slowly they stole along in the shadows to the porch and onto the steps. Sure enough, the front door stood open. Mr.

Kinsman entered first and Joe followed. Jerry and the officer, according to instructions hastily given, stood just outside the double door, while Mr. Kinsman stood by the single door. He gave a low whistle and Joe snapped the lights. At the same moment they opened both doors. Their surmise was correct. Before them were two men, crouching before the safe. "Hands up," shouted all four at once. The blinding and unexpected light and the four voices, for Joe though unarmed had shouted too, were too great a surprise for the burglars. They stared for a moment at two revolvers and a shot gun and held up their hands.

It was but an instant's work for the officer to put handcuffs on them and search them. Joe hurried to the attic where the impatient Tom was waiting and brought him to the scene. Then all together they made their way to the station.

When they entered, Joe stepped to the desk and said politely, "Here, Mr. Officer, are the burglars I saw in my dreams. Will you be good enough to lock them up?"

The astonished officer gave one look, and then said:

"Young man, rest easy about that. You have done a good night's work, all of you. These men have been wanted here for some time.

You may be certain that they will not trouble us again for many moons."

But Tom and Joe invited themselves to spend the rest of the night in the stable with Jerry.

CHAPTER V.

UNDER DISCIPLINE.



The whole town was stirred by the story of the capture of the burglars and Joe's flight in his glider. So many people came to see the machine that Joe feared Uncle Russell's disapproval, so he took it apart and carried it to the attic again. When

Uncle Russell came home and heard of the episode, he called Joe and Tom into his library and gravely invited them to sit down. After they had told all the details of the adventure, he said:

"You boys have done me a great service and I appreciate it. Joe, what do you call your machine?"

"Darius Green," answered the unsuspecting Joe.

Uncle Russell laughed heartily. Joe looked somewhat embarrassed, and glanced uneasily at Tom.

"I suggested the name, sir," said Tom, "while we were building the glider. I think that Joe does not know the poem."

Uncle Russell stepped to a book case and took down a well worn volume.

"I think I will read it to him."

The Colonel began to read, stopping now and then to make comments.

"Darius was a prophet. He predicted the time when men would fly. Here are the words:

" 'Darius was clearly of the opinion
That the air is also man's dominion,
And that, with paddle or fin or pinion,
We soon or late
Shall navigate

The azure as we now sail the sea.' "

"He gave his reasons, also," added the Colonel. "They are not scientific but they show a great deal of faith in man:

" 'Birds can fly
'An' why can't I?
Must we give in,
Says he with a grin,
'T the bluebird and phoebe
Are smarter'n we be?' "

He read how Darius built a great pair of wings and jumped off a springboard which he

had pushed out of a second story window. Darius' flight was downward; he crashed with humiliating promptness to the ground.

Joe was much interested but he said, looking at Tom reproachfully, "You might have hoodooed me, Tom, by calling that glider Darius Green."

Uncle Russell closed the book.

"And now, boys, I wish to do something for you in turn. What can I do that would please you?"

Joe hesitated but a moment. "I wish, Uncle Russell, that you would permit the Young Crusaders to camp this summer, at the 'old farm'."

The "old farm" was a splendid property of several hundred acres, belonging to Uncle Russell. It was about ten miles from Portage and near the river. It would be an ideal camping ground.

Uncle Russell thought for a few moments and then said:

"That is a very reasonable request and a very unselfish one. I am glad to grant it. You may use the grove for three weeks at any time in the summer you wish."

The delighted boys took this news to the next meeting of the Young Crusaders and there was great rejoicing. The club was steadily growing and the boys were drilling with en-

thusiasm. At each meeting, for an hour, Frank Sumner instructed the group. The basement of the school rang with martial orders, and resounded with the rhythmical tramp of the feet of marching companies. Uniforms had not yet been secured, but the style had been determined. They were to be of khaki and similar to the Rough Rider uniform.

There were now about forty-five boys in the club. They were divided into three platoons of twelve each. The remainder were officers. Rapidly they learned their duties and the tactics were studied as regularly as arithmetic.

One night at the meeting there was a quiet little stranger. He proved to be a tailor. Each boy was measured. Then began the interest in getting uniforms. By leaps and bounds the funds in the treasury increased as the boys paid their assessments.

One night a long slim package was lying on the Secretary's desk. When it was opened it was found to contain bright swords, the gift of Mr. Kinsman to the club, for its officers. No sooner had they strapped them on than two boys entered carrying a larger package. This was opened amidst intense excitement and a beautiful silk flag was disclosed to view, the gift of Mr. Sumner. Speeches were called for, and Pat McGuire

paid an eloquent tribute to the generosity of the men.

At last, in March, the uniforms were ordered. They came early in May. What a scene of commotion and rejoicing it was when the great box was delivered at the High School door. A special meeting was called at once and the box opened. There they were, spotless brown coats and trousers, with laced leggings and brown hats. The boys carried them home, with instructions to wear them at the next meeting.

Portage began to take notice when on Friday night from every direction, boys, singly and in groups, made their way, in their uniforms, from their homes to the High School. Sober citizens smiled and timid old ladies began to be nervous, fearing that some unexpected war had broken out.

Upon assembling, Captain Warren said, "We shall dispense with the usual meeting as we have an important engagement to keep tonight.

"Company, fall in."

Quickly the long line of uniformed warriors took their accustomed places. The bright and natty uniforms produced such an effect that each boy thought himself more the soldier.

"Right face." Like a single man they turned.

"Forward, column right. March."

The line moved like clock work. What was to happen? The head of the column reached the open door and passed out into the school yard.

"Column left. March."

Now they were headed for the street.

"Company halt, left face."

At last they were in the street, a group of soldiers. How proud they were.

"Company, attention. We are about to make a short march. The strictest obedience to orders is enjoined.

"Right forward, fours right. March!"

How different the familiar order sounded in the open. With alert step the first set of fours led by Dick Brewer, moved forward. The second and other sets swung to the right, and followed the first. The entire company was in motion, led by Captain Warren. Each lieutenant was in place, alongside his platoon. In front was Emil Durr, proudly carrying the silk flag.

As the company passed along the streets, pedestrians stopped to look. Small boys gathered behind the marching column. When they reached the wider section of Main street, Captain Warren began a series of manoeuvres that

were carried out with perfect accuracy and great spirit.

“Fours left. March.”

Briskly the fours swung, and marched across the street in one long line.

“Fours right. March.”

The line broke into fours again, continuing on the left side of the street.

“Right oblique. March.”

On a long diagonal, they moved to the proper side of the street. By this time they were in the heart of the town and scores of people were watching.

“Left front into line. March. Company halt.”

The first set of fours stopped. With brisk movement the second set obliques to the left, and took their places alongside the first set. Rapidly in succession the others followed. As soon as the line was complete, the command came quickly:

“Right forward, fours right. March.” Again they were in a marching column of fours and moving on. A great ripple of applause greeted this manoeuvre.

Each boy's heart thrilled with satisfaction. The column entered Laurel Avenue, a stately street of beautiful homes. A few minutes later the command came suddenly:

"Column right. March!"

The company swung into a driveway and in a moment was drawn up in a long line before Colonel Russell's house.

Colonel Russell was standing upon his porch, evidently awaiting the company. Captain Warren stepped forward and saluted with his sword. In military fashion the Colonel returned the salute by raising his hand to his forehead.

Tom then began:

"Colonel Russell, I have the honor to present to you this company of Young Crusaders. Our errand is a peaceful one. We wish to pay you our respects and to show our gratitude to you for permitting us to arrange for a camp on your farm."

The Colonel took a step forward and saluting again, replied to Tom's speech.

"Captain Warren, Mr. Kinsman, Mr. Sumner, and gentlemen of the Young Crusaders, I am very glad to have this opportunity to see you. I congratulate you on your splendid appearance and the proficiency of your drill. It is a privilege to me to be allowed to assist in making your summer camp a success. Your organization is a worthy one. If I may be permitted to say it, you are not to cultivate the warlike spirit, but to promote peace among

men. But military discipline is valuable, because it assists you to be self-reliant, and teaches you the value of obedience. In so far as you observe that lesson, you will enjoy your organization and will benefit from your experience in camp. At the same time, you must never forget that you must defend that flag beneath which you assemble. Peace, as well as war, has its struggles, however; the fight to maintain the honor of the flag is as much the duty of the honorable citizen among his fellows as it is the duty of the soldier on the battle field. The honor of the flag in time of peace is not maintained by bullets and powder, but by the honesty, purity, chivalry and courage of every one who loves his native land and honors the stars and stripes. May you learn to be the true patriots, who will maintain manly righteousness and learn honorable obedience in the days of your youth, and bring honor to the emblem of our nation through all your lives. And forget not also the great lesson of the cross, that you are soldiers of the army of God."

As the Colonel saluted the flag, a great cheer burst from the boys. Joe raised his bugle to his lips and sounded the spirited call "To the Color." As the last note sounded, each platoon moved in quick time, the first platoon to the

right, the second behind, and the third to the left of the color which was raised aloft by Durr. They formed thus three sides of a hollow square. The officers at once formed in the front, completing the square. It was so quickly done and with such precision that the astonished Colonel clapped his hands with delight.

The bugle sounded again and the platoons resumed their former places.

"Captain Warren," said the Colonel, "may I take command of your forces?"

The astonished Tom was equal to the occasion. Hastily unbuckling his sword, he handed it to Colonel Russell, with the words:

"We surrender."

His face glowing with satisfaction, Colonel Russell took the sword, and descended the steps.

"Attention, Company. We are about to visit the famous spot where Bugler Russell made his notable descent in his glider. Right face, Forward, March."

The column of eager boys moved past the house.

"Column left, March."

Alongside the house they went. As the column reached the wide stretch of lawn in the rear, a sight met their eyes that caused them to gasp. A long row of tables was stretched

from the kitchen door to the carriage house. Above the tables were hung Japanese lanterns. Upon the tables were huge plates of sandwiches and cake, and many glasses. But strangest of all, behind the tables stood a solid phalanx of girls, the sisters and cousins and friends of the Young Crusaders. As the boys in single rank came into the light of the lanterns the girls began to applaud. The brown line, which felt itself capable of withstanding a charge of cavalry, to such a pitch had its ardor been aroused by the Colonel's speech, now wavered in embarrassment before the battery of admiring eyes. When the column was parallel with the tables, the Colonel commanded "Halt."

"Left face." This brought upon the line the concentrated fire of bright faces reinforced by joyous laughter.

"Attention, Company. Charge." The Colonel laughed aloud as he gave the order. The boys made a short and hesitating rush, and brought up sharply at the table. There was a moment of indecision, and then their youthful spirits rallied to the occasion. Very soon there was a great confusion of laughter and conversation. The delicacies were not forgotten and the whole company of boys and girls gave the Colonel no reason to believe that his hospi-

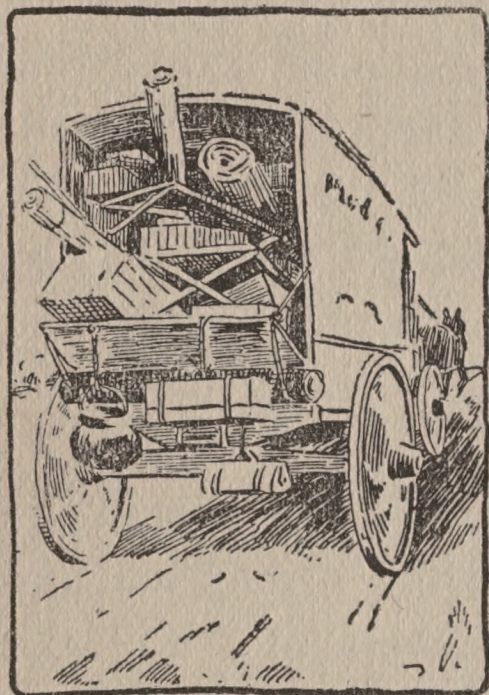
tality was not appreciated. Pat McGuire vainly tried to make a speech, while Joe was the center of a group who begged him to try another flight in his glider. Lucky Davis and Leo Inwood even agreed to impersonate the burglars, if Joe and the others would give an encore. Jimmie Harding made an expedition to the barn and brought forth the reluctant Jerry, much to the delight of the crowd. An hour passed rapidly and delightfully. In the meantime the parents of the young people had come, and watched the scene with greatest interest.

Colonel Russell relinquished the command to Tom again, and the boys were assembled and marched back to their quarters at the High School, while the girls and their parents took their leave likewise.

It was an occasion that was long remembered among the Young Crusaders, the beginning of many happy days for the organization.

CHAPTER VI.

PREPARING FOR CAMP.



The days of school were now drawing to a close. Little Joe had been able, by a great effort, to prevent his high spirits from interfering with his recitations and he had not been kept in so much of late. Mr. Kinsman and Mr. Sumner had been busy with the work of the Young

Crusaders. Another teacher of the school, Mr. Jackson, had become interested in the work and had been installed as a Warden. He was very welcome as he had a large practical knowledge of camps. For several years he had taken small parties of boys to a near-by lake.

It had been decided to go to camp the last two weeks of June. The High School would close before that time. On the morning of the last Friday in May, Joe Russell came to school with such an air of exhilaration that Art Miles at once noticed it.

"Look at Little Joe. Has someone left you a fortune, Joe?"

Joe's only response was to give Art a friendly blow on the chest with the back of his hand.

"Happy Potter" took up the teasing.

"Did someone do your chores for you, Joe, or have you found a horse shoe?"

Joe turned and said, "You fellows would rejoice too if you knew what I know."

This was too much for Pat McGuire's curiosity.

"Come now, Joseph, me boy, if you know anything for the good of humanity, do not restrain it beneath your jacket, but blurt it forth. Too much knowledge is a dangerous thing for ye. Ye might explode."

Joe's only answer was an indignant look, and the remark, "Wait until tonight, at the meeting."

Joe's good spirits seemed to have spread to Mr. Kinsman and Mr. Jackson, for they were discovered in jubilant consultation. Even Frank Sumner made a trip to the High School to see Mr. Kinsman. Captain Warren was evidently burdened with some secret. But nothing was made known.

The meeting that night was charged with an air of expectancy, and the boys were not disappointed. After the routine business the com-

pany was formed and Mr. Sumner stepped forward.

"I wish to say," he began slowly, "that you are very fortunate young men. There has been one thing lacking in our company. Through the generosity of Colonel Russell, that want has been supplied. Company, right face. Forward, March."

The mystified boys marched eagerly from the room, and much to their amazement, up the stairs and into the hall. There they came upon their surprise. For in the main corridor, neatly arranged in a dozen stacks, were bright and glistening rifles. A great cheer resounded, and there would have been a wild break for the guns, had not the discipline of many a drill prevented. There had been a great longing for guns, but the funds were not sufficient to purchase them.

To each private, a rifle was given, after its number had been taken. Each boy was told that he would be responsible for the rifle so given. No rifle was to be loaded, and if a gun were shot, the offender would be dismissed from the organization. The rifles for the present were for drill only.

It was a willing group which, that night, received its first instruction in the manual of arms. The time for camp was now close at

hand, and each boy was eager to do his best. Mr. Jackson made the announcement that tents had been rented and that, at the next meeting, full instructions would be given. No one was absent when that meeting was called to order.

The directions were very minute, and each member copied the list of articles needed for his personal use at camp. Each boy was to bring to the High School, on Monday night, the fourteenth of June, a cot, with sufficient bedding; a box containing his clothing, soap, towels, needles and thread, several candles, a hammer or hatchet, a plate, knife, fork, spoons, a cup, and a yard and a half of oil cloth.

Mr. Sumner and Mr. Jackson reported that they had employed a cook and had rented a stove. They had bought the necessary cooking utensils and a sufficient supply of groceries. The camp assessment of five dollars a boy, had been paid in small amounts during the winter, and Ralph Underwood, the Treasurer, was well able to meet all necessary expenses.

The Hospital Corps, in charge of Ted Potter, reported itself ready for service. This had been formed, at Mr. Sumner's suggestion, early in the winter. Four interested boys made a diligent study of Major Pilcher's book "First Aid to the Injured," and had prepared a medicine chest, which contained bandages and anti-

septic gauze, adhesive tape and liniments, besides medicine for minor diseases, and ointments for possible bites and burns.

On Monday afternoon, before the start, the High School yard was a scene of greatest confusion. Cots were heaped up until passersby were in danger of being buried by a collapse of the pyramid. Boxes of all sorts were scattered about. The camp kitchen with the pine boxes filled with groceries, made a distinct section. Among the equipment were several bicycles. At five o'clock two huge drays drove into the yard, and the work of loading began. Many hands made light labor. It was not long before cots, boxes, stove and utensils were safely stored in the capacious drays. The drays were then drawn to the barn to remain for the night. They would start early in the morning for the camp ten miles away. Thus they would reach the camp before the company.

Tuesday morning dawned bright and beautiful. Orders had been given to the company to assemble at eight o'clock. Before seven, boys appeared, with guns on their shoulders, and their knapsacks bursting with lunches, bountifully prepared by good mothers. Mr. Kinsman, Mr. Sumner and Mr. Jackson were on the scene, each with a fresh new khaki uniform. The boys were greatly pleased at this and were

not slow to express their satisfaction. The company formed at eight promptly. Durr proudly carried the great silken flag. A rabble of small boys hovered about. Some of them stood in awe, while viewing the preparations for getting away. Some looked wistfully at their older and more fortunate companions. A few ventured to poke a little fun at the youthful soldiers, showing no fear of an armed force.

"Company, Fall in."

When that order was given, it really seemed as if camp had begun. Lieutenant Harding gave Lieutenant Miles a slap on the back, as they hurried to their places in the rear of the platoons, saying, "We are off."

"Right dress, Front."

As straight as a ramrod, the long line extended across the High School yard.

"Right shoulder, Arms."

Each gun was grasped at the balance by the right hand and lifted until the hand was at the height of the chin; each piece was then placed on the right shoulder, each hand was dropped to the side.

"Right forward, fours right, March."

With swinging, alert step, the column moves from the yard, and is on its way to the station.

As the company is approaching the business section of Portage, followed by an interested

group on the sidewalk, there suddenly sounds upon the air, the clanging alarm of "Fire" from the engine house gong. A tremor of excitement passes over the lines. Where is the fire? What is it? Soon the sound of galloping horses is heard. They are approaching the company from the rear. Quickly the alert Captain shouts:

"Left oblique, Double time, March."

In a moment, the boys are safe on the other side of the street. The fire chief, and the fire engine, hook and ladder, and hose cart dash by. People begin to rush toward the business section. A huge cloud of black smoke is seen rising about three blocks away. Mr. Kinsman and Mr. Sumner hold a hurried consultation. Would it be wise to take the company into that district? Just then, an automobile dashes up and an assistant fire chief steps out. He hastens to Mr. Kinsman.

"There has been an explosion in the Tennant Block. Fire has spread through the whole building and it is going like tinder. There is great danger that the walls have been weakened and they may fall. The police force is too small to keep the people back, and the fire department is hindered in its work. Could you use your company to help establish a fire line?"

"We certainly can," was the quick response.

"Captain Warren," he shouted, "Advance your men at double time."

"Company, Forward, Double Time, March."

The commands rang out with all the force of an officer about to make a charge in battle. Quickly the company went down the street. Mr. Sumner stepped into the automobile, and went to the scene in advance, in order to determine what was best to be done. The greatest confusion prevailed. Three fire companies had arrived, but were impeded by the crowding townsfolk. The fire was burning briskly. The Tennant Building was in the middle of a block on Main street, right at the head of Vine. A few policemen were vainly endeavoring to hold back the ever growing crowd that was coming from both directions on Main and also from Vine. Mr. Sumner saw in a moment that there was serious work to be done. He quickly made his plans. A cheer was arising from up the street. It was getting louder. In two minutes the whole company of Young Crusaders burst into view, marching in double time. Attention was taken momentarily from the fire. The chief of police rushed up and asked Mr. Sumner what could be done with the boys.

"How many police have you?"

"About ten."

"If you will put three officers with each of my platoons we will clear the street."

"I will do so," answered the chief.

In the meantime the boys had halted just before they reached the corner of Vine street. By a few short commands, they were stretched across Main in three lines, in open order, so that they reached from building to building. The astonished crowd, distracted between the boys and the fire, was on tiptoe of expectation. The fire companies had not yet succeeded in getting a stream on the fire, owing to the difficulties. Two stood on Vine street and one on Main.

Above the din and confusion, the voice of Mr. Sumner was heard.

"Carry Arms! Fix Bayonets."

As the shiny bayonets slipped into place, the crowd began to realize that they might be in the way, and there was a motion of retreat.

"First platoon, Forward, Double time, March.

"Second platoon, Forward, Column left, March.

"Third platoon, About face, Forward, March."

There was no hesitation. The first platoon swept along Main street, and the people hastened back. The second, quickly following,

turned into Vine street, while the third having faced about, moved the crowd that had gathered behind them. The chief of police, true to his word, backed the shining bayonets with his men, who ran with the platoons, shouting to the people to move, and waving their short clubs.

The crowd showed no disposition to hesitate. It began to give way. The Wardens, according to a permanent arrangement, went with their platoons: Mr. Kinsman with the first, Mr. Sumner with the second, Mr. Jackson with the third. This plan of oversight had been adopted early in the formation of the company. This left the Captain, Standard Bearer, and Bugler, standing in the street.

The lieutenants were now directly in command under the Wardens. They had their troubles. Lieutenant Harding, charging up Main street had the most. The crowd here was more dense. One big fellow was determined to get through the line. He dodged the police, and ran toward the line of bayonets. No boy would dare to touch him with the weapon, he knew. He passed the line between two boys, who vainly tried to seize him. But he reckoned without Harding. Jimmie knew that if one made a successful effort to break through, many would follow. They were all relying on the

moral force of the attack, not the physical. But Jimmie had a high sense of duty. Tossing his sword from him, he made a swift run toward the intruder, who was running also, and with a skill, born of long practice, he tackled him, a regular football tackle about the knees. The man came to the ground in a heap. A policeman stood over him, as he arose angrily, and placed him under arrest. The crowd cheered wildly. No one else made an attempt to get closer. They feared Jimmie more than the bayonets. Harding resumed his sword. After a moment he brought his platoon to a halt. There it stood as a guard, while the policemen, now reinforced, maintained order.

Lieutenant Miles, swinging into Vine street had less trouble. Just as they passed the fire apparatus, a hose began to play. For one moment the firemen played it toward the crowd on Vine street. It was most effective. The platoon took up their station half way along the block, and stood guard.

Lieutenant Potter had but a comparatively small crowd before him, when he charged his platoon on Main street in the other direction. They met with no difficulty.

The fire was raging fiercely, but six streams were now directed upon it. The adjoining buildings were in danger, although protected

by fire walls. Valiantly the firemen worked. For an hour they battled. But it was in vain. Suddenly there was an ominous crackling, a moment's warning. The fire chief ordered his men back. Scarcely had they reached safety, when the front wall collapsed, filling the street with a mass of stones, burning timbers and huge sparks.

In another hour, the flames were completely under control. During all this time, the Young Crusaders kept their ground. Additional police reserves had now reached the scene; ropes had been stretched and the order came for the Young Crusaders to assemble. Directions were given for each platoon to march into Vine street. This was done, and the whole company soon formed.

There was great excitement among the boys. But Mr. Kinsman thought it best to get away from the scene, so they marched to the station. They had of course missed their early train, but there would be another within a short time.

Orders were given, and soon the Young Crusaders were lined up on the station platform, conscious that they were veterans with a good service record.

CHAPTER VII.

ARRIVAL AT CAMP.



The train finally pulled in, and the boys found seats for their short journey to Lynn's Crossing, the station nearest the farm. The interested passengers asked scores of questions and the story of the organization and the fire was soon known to them.

When the conductor had passed through the train, in company with Mr. Sumner, he said, "Your ticket calls for forty-eight persons and I find only forty-seven."

Mr. Sumner was puzzled. He knew there ought to be forty-eight. There were thirty-six privates, eight officers, three Wardens and the colored cook who had joined them at the station. He quickly summoned the lieutenants and instructed each to discover if every member of his platoon was on the train. Lieutenant Harding soon reported that Pat McGuire was missing. He had certainly been

at the station. Pat was reliable, and no deserter. While Mr. Sumner was puzzling over his disappearance, the train stopped at Lynn's Crossing. As they alighted and formed, the station master appeared, waving a telegram and calling "Mr. Kinsman."

Mr. Kinsman took the yellow sheet and read it.

John Thomas Kinsman, Lynn's Crossing:

Unavoidably detained. Extravagantly apologetic. Instantaneous concurrence of unpremeditated obstacles. Accelerabo.

Patrick Terence O'Neil McGuire.

Mr. Kinsman hastened to show it to the anxious Mr. Sumner. Both laughed.

The perplexed station master waited a moment and then said:

"It's none of my business, but that's the biggest quarter's worth of telegraphing that I have ever taken in this office. Is that fellow McGuire all right?"

"He does seem to be wordy."

"I got it all pretty fair, until I came to that last word. I made them repeat it. I put it down as it came, and it sounds like some sort of vegetable. That fellow isn't coming to these parts, by any chance, is he?"

"He will be along on the next train. That word 'accelerabo,' is a Latin form, meaning 'I shall hasten.' Pat couldn't get all in, within ten words, in English."

"Well I'll look out for him and hide behind the station when he comes. If he talked to me like that I'd not be able to send a 'wire' for a week. You'd better have someone here to take charge of him."

The station master retreated shaking his head. When last seen he was turning the key in the door of his little office, and locking the windows.

Pat being accounted for, temporarily at least, the relieved officers made ready to march to the farm. It was about a mile distant. Over the country road went the company at route step. It was a beautiful day. The fields were yellow with waving ripened grain. A gentle breeze made tolerable the heat of the noon day sun. They passed several farm houses from which emerged entire families, for it was dinner hour, to see the unwonted sight. The great silken flag made a brilliant spot of color in the green background. Soon the company turned into a long lane. At the end they marched through a grove and out into the open meadow, their camp site.

There were their wagons, not yet unloaded;



“THE WOODED SLOPE ON THE SOUTH CAST ITS SHADOW OVER THE CAMP”

the weary drivers were taking a nap in the shade of the trees. The boys were marched to the edge of the grove, and commanded to be at ease and eat their lunches. Quickly they made themselves comfortable on the grass, opened their knapsacks, and satisfied their hunger.

It was a beautiful location for a camp. A wide bit of meadow land lay at the edge of a wooded slope. At the west end was a thick, wild grove with a deep ravine stretching on for a long distance. On the north was a hill with the lower portions gently sloping, and rising more abruptly above. Its top was crowned with trees. On the east was the wide grove through which they marched, flanked by the edge of a large tract of forest land. A creek ran from the ravine, crossed the open space, and followed the foot of the hill to the distant river. The creek divided the open space into two parts. The camp site itself was roomy, and covered with close cropped grass. The wooded slope on the south cast its shadow over the spot in the afternoon, making it cool and pleasant.

After lunch the unloading proceeded with system. The wagons were drawn to the east edge, but a little to one side, of the camp proper. To the north of the camp site there was outlined by a few stones a duplicate plan of

the camp, with Headquarters at one end. The kitchen was to be beyond the creek. When the duplicate place had been traced and each tent indicated by a stone, the boys in groups of three were ordered to take their places about the stones so that the relative position and arrangement of the groups could be determined. The tent for the officers was to be at the foot of the camp street.

As each article was taken from the wagon it was carried to the place in the temporary camp plan, corresponding to the place in the camp that it would later occupy. Everything belonging to the kitchen was carried directly to the site beyond the creek. The tents themselves were left near the wagons.

In a short time the wagons were empty and all the possessions of the company were arranged in piles on their temporary abiding place on the camp plan, just north of the camp site. As yet not a single thing was on the spot where the camp itself would rise.

The first platoon was then detailed to erect the cook's tent, to set up the stove, the tables, and to arrange the boxes of provisions. The second platoon was detailed to erect the large Headquarters tent. The third platoon was detailed to erect the first tent of the camp street.

It was a scene of greatest activity. Head-

quarters tent, with its twin poles and enormous fly, was soon in position. The air resounded with the sound of hammers in the hands of the boys driving the stakes for the tent ropes. Tent No. 1 was soon in place on the right and in front of Headquarters. The others quickly followed, being carefully placed so that each tent was equally distant from its neighbor, and in perfect alignment. The tents were in two rows facing each other. The rows were about thirty feet apart, forming a street. There were seven tents on each side. At one end was Headquarters and at the other end was erected the tent for the officers.

When all this was done, each boy was instructed to bring his cot to his tent. This was done with no confusion, owing to the fact that each boy's belongings had been properly distributed in the temporary camp plan. There were three cots in each tent, one against each side wall and one against the rear wall. They then brought their boxes, took out their clothing and made their beds.

Mr. Kinsman, Mr. Sumner and Mr. Jackson took possession of Headquarters; Warren, Harding, Miles and Potter occupied the officers' tent. Brewer and Inwood had one tent to themselves, as did Russell and Durr.

By five o'clock everything was in order, and

a tired lot of boys awaited the summons to supper. But the colored cook, he who had cooked at many a meeting of the National Guard, had had troubles of his own. It was a long task to prepare a camp kitchen so that nearly fifty persons could be fed three times a day. But Blewie, the cook, had the knack, and by an ingenious use of facilities at hand, he soon had a great kettle of hot soup, a pan of hard boiled eggs, and thick slices of corn beef, on the serving table.

The company was assembled by the welcome call of "Mess," sounded on the bugle. According to previous instruction, each carried his plate and cup, and other utensils for his personal use. The eager line was marched past the serving tables, where the three Wardens, giving an example of duty to be expected later of all the others, filled each cup with soup, and heaped each plate with the other provisions prepared by Blewie. The boys, as soon as supplied, sat by the long tables, and with rollicking joke, and good natured fun, satisfied the inner man. Each, as he finished, washed his dishes in the creek and restored them to his tent.

After an hour, the bugle again sounded, this time "Assembly." Mr. Sumner stood before the group and made a speech.

"You have done valiant service today and the Wardens are very proud of coöperating with you. We have had a long day, with much work. So no more will be expected of you to-night, except to go to bed and get a good rest. Our routine will begin tomorrow after breakfast and will continue without interruption. Captain Warren will be Officer of the Day and have charge of all the routine duty and of the camp. Each private will be on guard duty in turn. There will be one guard from 6 a. m. to 10 p. m., and two guards from 10 p. m. throughout the night. Your hours of duty will be posted and you must be ready near your tent when your time comes. The Officer of the Day will change the guards during the day, and until ten at night. After that the guards must awaken those who are to follow them, at the proper time. Tattoo will sound at 9 and Taps at 9:15. Any noise in tents after Taps will become a cause for discipline. May you sleep well. Dismissed."

Although Taps were not to be sounded for an hour, many boys made their way to their tents to get ready for the night. A few built a bonfire on the edge of the camp and sat near it. They were all too tired for much frolic.

At nine sharp, Little Joe stood before Headquarters tent, and lifted his bugle to his lips.

Soon "Tattoo" resounded through the camp, and the few strollers quickly hastened beneath canvas. Fifteen minutes later, the slow and melodious notes of Taps sounded, and as the last lingering note died away the lights in each tent went out. Only Headquarters and the officers' tent remained lighted. They had special privileges.

The Wardens and the Captain sat before the bonfire discussing the day's events in low voices. Little Joe joined them. Suddenly he said,

"Where's Pat?"

In the excitement of the day, Pat had been forgotten.

"Why sure enough," said Mr. Sumner, "Pat is not here yet. I heard a train whistle a while ago. I believe I will stroll to the road. He may be on the way."

Ten minutes later Mr. Sumner appeared, and with him the pathetic figure of Pat. There was a look of chagrin and disappointment on his face, that was not often seen in the joyous features of the light hearted Pat.

Mr. Jackson, with an instinct that was unerring, hastened to the kitchen and brought Pat all that he could readily find of the remains of the supper. Pat ate with such relish that all knew that hunger had added to his despair. But the food restored somewhat his spirits, and

he soon began to tell his story, under a fire of questions.

“Gentlemen, if ye will let me tell it me own way, I’ll give you all the facts. The most obvious fact is that I am a green Irishman. Ye know we stood a considerable time upon the platform of the station. A polite stranger desired to learn the rayson for the massing of our troops, and he asked me a number of questions. I wasn’t reluctant to enlighten him. He was a pleasant man, and began to make some personal inquiries. He then said that he was a jeweler by trade, and was traveling about the state trying to introduce a famous Swiss movement for watches. ‘Had I watch?’ I had. He asked to look at it. He did. ‘This is a fine case,’ says he, ‘but inferior works.’ It was a good watch, just given to me by my father. ‘It’s all right,’ says I. ‘It is indeed,’ says he, ‘but it would be a hundred percent better if it had my Swiss movement. You’re a fine group of lads,’ says he, ‘and if ye will let me take your watch to the jeweler’s yonder, I’ll insert an elegant Swiss movement in your case in less than no time. The train will not be here for ten minutes.’

“Well, I let him do it. As I stood watching him go into the jeweler’s, the train pulled in. I ran to the jeweler’s with all my might, but

when I entered, the store was empty except for the jeweler himself, who was a'fixing of an old clock. 'Where's that man?' says I. 'What man?' says he. 'The fellow with the Swiss movement,' says I, excited like, 'who came in here.' 'He passed through the store,' says he. 'He said he was trying to find a drayman in the alley.' I ran through but there was no one there.

"When I came back the train was gone, but there was my man a'standing on the platform, thinking I was on the train. Just then I saw Jerry, a'waitin' near the station. I told what had happened, and Jerry called a friend of his. Together we walked up to our man with the Swiss movement. He was so surprised he did not have time to run.

"'I'll trouble you for my watch,' says I. 'What watch,' says he, kind o' feeble. 'Turn him upside down, Jerry,' says I. 'Wait,' says he, now scared. 'Be you the lad that dropped the watch on the station platform?' 'I am,' says I, 'and it had a five dollar bill sticking through the stem-ring.' 'What,' says he, surprised like. 'Yes,' says I, 'a five dollar bill, didn't it, Jerry?' 'Sure,' says Jerry.

"Well that Swiss movement man reached into one pocket and pulled out me watch, and into another pocket and pulled out a five dollar

bill and handed it to me. I made a polite speech, thanking him for his courtesy and hoping that he would visit us again, and then we went and sent you the telegram. I tried to get my money's worth in that telegram, as it went such a short distance. And here is the five dollars. It isn't mine. I am sorry I had to appear to tell a lie, but it wasn't really a lie. It was merely a polite hint. It's for the camp fund. And now I think I'll go to bed. Good night."

"Just a moment, Pat," said Mr. Kinsman. "I am not sure that I approve of your taking this money. I presume it would have cost the man much more than this had you handed him over to the police, but you must find some very good use for this five dollars. Good night."

CHAPTER VIII.

A LONG DAY.



The same night before going to bed, Mr. Kinsman dropped into the officers' tent. He found the Captain and lieutenants in deep discussion.

"Mr. Kinsman," asked Miles, "what is the name of this camp to be?"

"Well, well, we do need a name," was the reply; "what would you suggest?"

"I would suggest," said Happy Potter, "that we call it Camp Mosquito. I have reliable information that there is a national convention of mosquitoes in the grove," and he slapped his neck vigorously.

"'Camp Crusader' appeals to me," said Jimmie Harding. "This camp is too dignified to be called after one of the fowls of the air, or the beasts of the field, whichever the pesky mosquito is. He is the white man's burden in this part of the world, that's sure."

"Try your famous knee high tackle on him, Jimmie," said Art Miles.

Jimmie grinned at this suggestion.

"'Camp Crusader' is a good name, I think," was Tom's comment.

"We shall have a meeting of the officers tomorrow and decide upon the name. I think, too, that 'Camp Crusader' is satisfactory." And Mr. Kinsman said "Good-night," and went to his tent.

The day dawned upon a soundly sleeping camp. The boys were tired from their previous day's experience. At six o'clock, however, the guard awakened Little Joe, who went out into the camp street and sounded the exhilarating call of "Reveille." The boys, not accustomed to being under canvas and no doubt disturbed by the bright sunlight, soon aroused from their slumber. In a few minutes the bank of the creek was lined with stooping figures. They were dashing water over head, face and neck, and rubbing themselves dry with rough towels. It was a primitive arrangement, but the best that the camp afforded as yet.

Promptly at six-thirty, the Bugler sounded the welcome call of "Mess" and the long line assembled, without coats now that camp was in progress, and marched to the serving table. Breakfast consisted of cereal, potatoes and ba-

con, bread and coffee. Blewie, the colored cook, had been hard at work since sun up. He had drafted, by a promise of extra favors, one or two sleepless boys, who had arisen early and had gone forth to explore the immediate surroundings of the camp. Blewie was a character. His real name was not Blewie, but when he had first appeared on the platform of the station one of the boys asked him, "Where did *you* come from?" He answered smiling, "Oh, I just blew in, came in an airship, and blew right here." "Good for you, Blewie," responded the boy, and Blewie it was from that time.

After breakfast the company had half an hour to clean up the camp and straighten out the tents. The officers then made a round of inspection. No neglect of cleanliness or order was overlooked. Every stick, stone or scrap of paper was removed from each tent and the adjoining part of the camp street. The walls of each tent were raised so that it could be thoroughly dried by the morning sun, and every article of clothing was put in its proper place.

After this was done, the company was again assembled and Mr. Sumner gave a long talk, with all the instructions as to the work of the camp, and its discipline. He also invited questions, so that there could be no doubt as to the meaning of his instructions.

The discipline of the camp was to be lenient and at the same time rigid. They had come for a good time, and the camp regulations were only those that would insure health, regularity and the accomplishment of necessary work. Every opportunity would be given for fun and freedom. But such rules as were necessary would be rigidly enforced. Each boy was to be credited with twenty merit marks. By each breach of discipline he would forfeit one or more marks, according to the judgment of the Warden. Should the twenty merit marks be forfeited the boy would be sent home.

The company then marched to the shade of a tree near by, which was designated as the Church. Here Mr. Kinsman conducted a brief service, using the Book of Common Prayer, with which the camp had been supplied. As the familiar prayers, used by many generations of our ancestors, were quietly offered, in the great open cathedral of nature, an uplifting seriousness seemed to rest upon the youthful faces. The hearty responses, and the full voiced "Amens" were an indication of strong interest and real devotion.

Serious drill began after "Church." The three platoons of twelve boys each were drilled separately, in order to give experience to the lieutenants. It was found a more difficult mat-

ter to keep the alignment and proper distance on the rough pasture land, than it was on the smooth city pavement. For an hour the platoons marched and countermarched, or practiced the manual of arms.

Drill over, the company marched to the camp street to await further orders. For convenience the first boy of each set of four was designated as a sergeant, and for detail duty had charge of his set of fours. Each detail had its duty, and as each task was accomplished the sergeant reported to the Officer of the Day. Mr. Sumner read the detail duty.

"Sergeant Campbell, detailed to clean camp and surrounding territory."

"Sergeant Ross, detailed to plan a flag staff."

"Sergeant Brown, detailed to cut kindling for cook and to carry water."

"Sergeant Merril, detailed to throw a bridge over creek, from camp to kitchen."

"Sergeant Hamilton, detailed to find a swimming hole." So to each some duty was assigned.

The Red Cross Squad in command of Ted Potter set itself seriously to study Major Pilcher's book on "First Aid to the Injured." They learned the difference between a false knot or "Granny" and an effective reef knot, practicing with their handkerchiefs. Slings and

bandages were also made, and each boy of the squad, in turn, became a patient and was swathed in bandages. Bruises and burns were investigated, and the proper treatment was learned.

Tourniquets, or bandages tightly twisted to stop bleeding, were also studied. This knowledge proved very useful to one boy, who later in the year, while hunting ducks, received the full load of his gun in the arm, by accidental discharge. He was alone in his boat at the time. He made a tourniquet by twisting his handkerchief about his arm with the aid of a pocket knife, and thus stopped the bleeding until help arrived. It was said by the surgeons who later treated him, that his promptness in making the tourniquet saved his life.

The experience of Blewie was very serviceable at one crisis. A boy was led to Headquarters who had been blinded temporarily by pepper, which another boy was thoughtlessly trying to sprinkle beneath his nose to make him sneeze. The Squad and the Wardens were at a loss what to do. The form of Blewie appeared in the door. "Bathe the eyes in this warm milk," was his direction, holding out a pan. The news had reached him, and he had acted promptly. The remedy was effective.

The treatment for poisons was also studied.

The camp was not without its minor accidents and ailments. But the efficient Red Cross Squad under the direction of Mr. Sumner, was equal to every emergency, and every boy kept well.

When work was done the boys were free. But it was nearly dinner time, and they were quite hungry enough to welcome the call of "Mess."

After dinner an hour was taken to practice for a sham battle, which was to be a daily feature of the camp. The boys were then free for the afternoon. It was not long before the camp looked like a deserted village. Except for the Officer of the Day and the solitary guard on his beat all were gone. Most of the boys went swimming in the large creek about half a mile away. A few explored the surrounding hills, while two or three took a long walk to the nearest village. At five all were in camp again for flag lowering.

It was announced that the camp would be called "Camp Crusader."

In the evening in the long twilight of June, the camp presented an animated appearance. There was a game of baseball on the pasture land, and races and jumping. As the light failed many gathered round the camp fire, where Mr. Jackson was telling stories of col-

lege experiences. Some were in Headquarters' tent consulting with Mr. Sumner. Some read in their own tents. A few were writing letters by the candle light. Several had found a source of pleasure in the wisdom of Blewie and were in his kitchen. At night he cast off the official sternness of camp cook and made the boys welcome. He was a man with high regard for soldierly discipline.

When all was quiet that night, little Joe joined Tom, who was sitting alone by the bonfire, waiting for the hour of ten when his duties as Officer of the Day should cease.

"Tom," said Joe, "listen. I have discovered something today. Is anyone about?"

"I think not," said Tom. "What have you discovered? That camp life gives one an appetite?"

"Better than that," answered Joe, glancing around to see that the sentinel was not near. The sentinel was at the other end of the beat, quietly enjoying a doughnut that the cook had given him. "I have discovered something that may help us to solve the mystery."

"What is it?" was Tom's calm reply. "Not some more a's and b's, written anywhere, I hope."

"No, listen. Frank Merrill and I went off for a walk. We were about half a mile from here

on the road that leads up the hill, south of the camp. We met a farmer, and he stopped and asked who we were. He was surprised at our uniforms. When I told him, he asked, 'Be ye campin' on Ezra Russell's old place?' I was surprised at that as I thought it was Uncle Russell's. So I asked him if Mr. Ezra Russell once owned it. He said that it was his until he died, and that Uncle Ezra had spent much of his time there. He then asked where the camp was. We could not see the tents from where we were, but just in the green spot below the camp the sentinel was walking. We could see him plainly. 'Do you see that sentinel?' I asked, pointing at him. 'Of course,' said he, 'that tree can be seen for miles around.' I was awfully perplexed for a moment, but it came over me like a flash, that the parchment had a tree on it and the word 'Sentinel.' I glanced in the direction the farmer had indicated and sure enough in the woods beyond the camp one tree was very plainly towering above the rest. I made some foolish remark, and then carefully noted the exact location of that tree. I am sure I can go right to it. Now that's our start, and if we do not discover something more, then we are dummies."

Tom sat silent a moment. Finally he said, "Joe, you are a wonder. You know the story

about Thoreau and the Indian arrow head?" Joe shook his head. "Well, one day he was taking a walk with a stranger, near his home in Concord and the stranger asked Thoreau where arrow heads could be found. 'Everywhere,' said Thoreau, and he stooped forward and picked one up. That's luck. You have it. Let's take another look at the parchment."

Joe went to his tent, opened a box and reaching to the very bottom of it got out the envelope. He carried it back to the bonfire and he and Tom studied it again.

"It's the letters that bother us," was Tom's comment. "I do not suppose finding the tree if it is the tree, will help us unless we decipher this disarranged alphabet."

"Suppose we take a look at the tree tomorrow. I'll ask Mr. Kinsman to let us off before the sham battle practice, so we can slip away. By the way, Frank Merrill gave me a bit of news. It seems that Mr. Kinsman is a second cousin of Frank's father. That is how he knew about it. Mr. Kinsman's father received a legacy when Mr. Kinsman was young. He had to take a journey to Australia to claim it. He wrote to Mrs. Kinsman that he had secured the money and would start home at once. Later word came that the vessel on which he sailed was lost at sea. He was not among the sur-

vivors. Mr. Kinsman is engaged to a girl in Cleveland, but he cannot marry as he has to support his mother. Frank Merrill says that Mr. Kinsman is doing what he can to save money enough to marry, but that it looks as if he would be compelled to wait a long time."

"That's too bad, Joe. Was the money lost too?"

"No one knows. Frank says they have investigated thoroughly but have found nothing."

"I heard father say that Mr. Kinsman might be elected principal of our high school some day, if he stayed here, but that it might be a long time."

"Here comes that sentinel, Tom. Give me the paper. I think I'll turn in. Good-night."

"Good-night, Joe."

Tom sat before the fire for some time, watching the dying embers. The moon was just peeping over the tree tops, which appeared as a delicate waving tracery against the sky. The white tents made golden by the glow of the moon looked like magic temples raised by fairy hands. The stillness of the quiet night aroused his thoughts to the solemnity of nature's resplendent beauty. Nothing was stirring in camp or tent, except the dark figure of the slowly moving sentinel, who, gun on shoulder as he went, made his watchful tour from

end to end of the camp. Ten o'clock finally came and Tom awoke the two guards in tent four, and having stationed them on their beats, went quietly toward his tent.

On the camp street he saluted Mr. Kinsman who was making his usual late inspection, and entering his tent he prepared to go to bed.

As was his custom, Mr. Kinsman went from tent to tent, throwing the light from an electric candle for an instant upon each sleeping figure. In one tent a boy would be found who had fallen asleep in his clothes. This boy must be assisted to undress. In another tent the blankets had slipped to the ground and must be adjusted. So each one's comfort was looked after.

When he looked into Tent 5 he found but one boy, little Larry Brush. The other cots were empty. Mr. Kinsman consulted his diagram and learned that his tent-mates were on guard. The little fellow seemed very restless. The Warden tried to discover the cause and stood watching the fair face of Larry, one of the youngest boys in the camp. He was muttering in his sleep. Mr. Kinsman laid a hand upon his head. He had no fever.

Suddenly Larry raised up with a quick and startled exclamation, "Mother, where are you?" His eyes were wide open and he stared

about. Mr. Kinsman put his hand on his shoulder.

"All right, Larry, old chap. Having a dream?"

"Oh, it's you, sir. I thought I heard mother's voice."

"Well, that would be a good sound, wouldn't it, Larry? I'd like to hear my mother's voice, too." Mr. Kinsman had lighted a candle and taken a seat on the other cot. "Aren't you sleeping well?"

"It took me some time to drop off, tonight. You see my tent mates are on guard, and that left me alone. It was very quiet after they had gone. I got to thinking about things at home. Portage seemed pretty far away. I guess—I guess—I guess I got lonesome."

"No wonder, old chap. You didn't eat too much supper, did you?"

"No, sir. I was a little out of sorts, and I didn't want much."

"What do you say to a bit of lunch, Larry? I could stand it, too. We'll just fool those guards and get some. Wait right here till I go to Headquarters."

When Mr. Kinsman returned he had a warm dressing gown. Larry stood up and the Warden wrapped it around him.

"See here, Larry, if Mr. Sumner wakes up we'll both lose five points. So be quiet."

The boy chuckled.

"Jump on my back. You can't walk barefooted over this street."

The little arms of Larry were soon about Mr. Kinsman's neck, as he hung on his back. They left the tent and slipped along in the shadows. When they reached Headquarters, Mr. Kinsman plumped him into his own large cot. There was just light enough to see the quiet figures of the other Wardens.

"Now you keep watch of Mr. Sumner. He eats boys at night, clothes and all. If he wakes up, duck under the blankets. When I come back, I'll give a low whistle outside. If everything is all right, you cough."

In about five minutes Larry heard the whistle. He responded with a cough. Mr. Kinsman tiptoed in, giving a glance at the second Warden.

"We mustn't get caught or we may be sent home, Larry."

He placed a tray on the cot, and drawing up a camp stool sat down. There were two bowls of milk, several large slices of bread and two spoons.

"Pitch in, Larry. This is a lark." And

Mr. Kinsman lighted a candle, carefully shading it from the Wardens.

Larry's eyes sparkled.

"This tastes fine. Wouldn't mother be surprised to see us here, if she could look in? She's coming out Friday. May I tell her about this?"

"Better not, son, or she will think I am a bad comrade for you, helping you to break the rules this way."

"This is a fine camp, Mr. Kinsman. I am having a great time. I hope we can stay a good while."

"Glad you enjoy it. But we men up here get lonesome, too, so when you have nothing else to do, come around to Headquarters. I always have a few odd jobs that I like a boy to help me with."

"I'll do it," and Larry's face lighted up. He had now eaten every morsel of his feast.

"You stay right here tonight. I'll need you first thing in the morning, and you'll be handy."

"But where will you sleep?"

"Oh! I'll manage. I have something to do now. So drop off, and sweet dreams."

Already the eyes of Larry were heavy. His head sank on the pillow and he relaxed into quiet slumber.

Mr. Kinsman waited until he saw the boy breathing regularly, and then cast his light toward the other Wardens. Both were up on their elbows, and looking with amused interest at the sleeping child.

"Not sick, John?" asked Mr. Sumner.

"Homesick, but he's all right now. You two imitations of sleeping beauties watch him. I'm going to bed. Good-night."

Mr. Kinsman informed the guards that Larry had been restless and that he had taken him to Headquarters to make sure he was not ill.

That night Mr. Kinsman slept in Larry's cot in Tent 5.

CHAPTER IX.

THE SIGNAL CORPS: ALSO A DISCOVERY.



It was a refreshed company of boys that assembled the next morning. They had become tired from the unaccustomed duties of camp and had slept long. They began to realize that sufficient sleep is absolutely necessary, that one may enjoy life in a military camp. To a tired

boy everything is a burden. The greatest emphasis had been laid upon the necessity of keeping quiet after taps.

Several breaches of discipline had occurred and Mr. Sumner had a list of them in his hand. He said briefly:

"I shall read the names of those who have forfeited credits. Inasmuch as some of you are trying to have a clean record, we have determined that if no further breach of discipline is reported for any boy whose name is read to-day, the credit points will be restored at the

end of the camp; in that way you may earn a clean record.

"Ingham forfeits one point, for being late for supper.

"Norris forfeits one point, for being late for drill.

"Gibbon forfeits two points, for leaving his gun outside his tent all night.

"Barry forfeits one point, for loud talking in his tent after taps.

"Bush forfeits two points, for leaving camp bounds without permission.

"Sergeant Canfield, you and your squad will report to Mr. Jackson for special drill."

Canfield and the three others of his set of four were mystified as to what that might mean. Mr. Jackson had a little bunch of tightly rolled flags in his hands. They went to a secluded place, and while the company had its regular drill, Mr. Jackson explained to them their special task.

He placed them about ten feet apart, and facing his own position. To each he gave a flag, mounted on a light bamboo pole. The flags were of white muslin, four feet square, having a red block, sixteen inches square, in the center.

Taking his own flag, Mr. Jackson said:

"I am about to instruct you in the principles

of military signalling. It is often necessary to send messages in this manner. There are two stations, a sending station and a receiving station. They may be as far apart as a flag can be seen with the naked eye. In a clear atmosphere the four foot flag may be read four or five miles. By using a field glass, it may be read twice as far.

"We now represent a sending station.

"You will take the position of a soldier facing an imaginary receiving station on yonder hill.

"Grasp the staff with both hands at the lower end, holding it upright, hands at waist.

"There are three motions to be learned:

"Motion 1. The signal is waved directly to your right, dipping the flag nearly to the ground.

"Motion 2. The signal is waved in a similar manner to the left.

"Motion 3. The signal is waved in a similar manner in front.

"Every letter of the alphabet is made by various combinations of motions 1 and 2.

"Motion three is used at the end of words and sentences.

"The letter A is 22. That is, the flag is waved twice to the left. When I announce the letter you will make the signal.

"Attention, Signal Corps. A." Four flags waving to the left of the sender, dipped twice to the ground. The boys easily grasped these simple principles. Five letters, A, B, C, D and E were learned thoroughly. Then Mr. Jackson announced simple words and the corps made the proper signals.

Bad, 2112-22-222-3.

Bed, 2112-12-222-3.

Cab, 121-22-2112-3.

Bead, 2112-12-22-222-3.

Then to each boy was given a slip of paper and he was required to write all the letters and their signals as follows:

A....22	J....1122	S....212
B....2112	K....2121	T....2
C....121	L....221	U....112
D....222	M....1221	V....1222
E....12	N....11	W....1121
F....2221	O....21	X....2122
G....2211	P....1212	Y....111
H....122	Q....1211	Z....2222
I....1	R....211	tion....1112

NUMERALS.

1....1111	4....2221	7....1222
2....2222	5....1122	8....2111
3....1112	6....2211	9....1221
		0..2112

Two boys were then sent about one hundred yards away to represent a receiving station, and were required to read the signals which were sent to them. They in turn became a sending station.

Finally Mr. Jackson said, "You will endeavor to learn the signals of each letter so that you need not refer to your chart. Tomorrow you will be required to give these instructions to other sets of fours. Dismissed."

The enthusiasm for signalling spread rapidly through the camp. During the afternoon many of the boys copied the chart of the alphabet, and learned the signals for the letters. They formed a long line leading from the ravine to the road—and messages were relayed from one to the other. It was not long before the letters were learned.

Joe and Tom received the necessary permission to leave the camp before the skirmish and they made their way toward the woods. Joe found his task of discovering his big tree harder than he expected. The forest was large and the foliage very thick and he could not distinguish the tree tops plainly. For some time they walked. They came to a large oak tree which prompted Joe to say:

"This must be the 'Sentinel.' It seems larger than any tree here."

"It is very hard to tell when there are so many big trees."

"I have it," said Joe. "I'll climb this tree and look about."

"But this tree is too big for you to climb, Joe."

Joe pulled from his belt a short hatchet with a small head. The sharp blade was incased in a sheathe.

"I'll manage it," was Joe's determination. He selected a small tree and quickly felled it. Trimming away the upper boughs but leaving the stout lower branches of the sapling, Joe leaned it against the huge oak, bracing it securely. He scrambled up the sapling and was soon in the topmost branches of the oak.

Turning about carefully, he made a survey as well as he could.

"I see it," he shouted to Tom. "Look where I am pointing."

With difficulty Tom saw the direction indicated.

"Wait, Joe," shouted Tom in return. "I will walk in that direction and you tell me when I am right."

Tom made his way for a hundred feet. Joe spied him and called out:

"More to your left. There, hold that place."

Joe scrambled down, while Tom waited. Joe

stood at the foot of the tree he had climbed, and sighting past Tom, located a second point beyond.

"Hold your place, Tom," he said. He then walked past Tom, to the point he had established.

"This is the right direction. Sight past me, to a point beyond me, Tom."

Tom did so, and repeated Joe's tactics. In a very short time they arrived at a tree about which they had no doubt. It was a giant oak, with a little open space about it. They could see that its top towered above its fellows.

"Here she is, Tom," shouted the exultant Joe. Joe made a low bow to the tree and then went up and gave it several pats with his open hand. "We have long desired to make your acquaintance."

Joe drew the parchment from his pocket, and they studied it with earnestness. But they got no further for it was undoubtedly the letters that gave the clue to the mystery.

"We may as well go back to camp," remarked Tom, at length. "How shall we find this tree easily again?"

"We can blaze a trail with my hatchet," answered Joe.

They carefully selected a tree which lay in the general direction of the camp and Joe

was about to cut into the bark, when Tom said:

"We'd better not damage any more trees. This is a private woods, and your Uncle Russell might not like it. Let us take a small withe and tie it around the tree."

They had no difficulty in finding a small supple switch, which they tied about the first tree. Into this they fastened small branches, with green leaves, so that the tree was girdled with a green belt. It was as conspicuous as the blazed bark would have been. This operation they repeated at short distances. Soon they emerged into the creek bed. After marking the point of entrance to their trail in the forest, they returned to the camp, more determined than ever to discover the hidden meaning of Uncle Ezra's parchment.

The afternoon passed as usual for the boys, and the evening was filled with discussions as to signalling both with flag and lantern. Talk turned likewise upon the possibility of a genuine invader getting into the camp past the sentinel. Ghost stories were also hinted at. The restlessness that sometimes overtakes groups of boys seemed to prevail in the camp. The Wardens noticed this and were watchful.

But the camp quieted down and the Wardens went to bed. Soon after ten, two creeping figures might have been seen stealing from the

rear of one of the tents and crawling in the shadow of the trees toward the grove. No one noticed them, however. They evaded the sentinel by waiting until he was at the opposite end of the beat. Once in the darkness of the grove they stood upright and whispered together. They were Pat McGuire and "Lucky" Davis.

"We can do it," said Pat. "I have watched the guards. They are apt to halt near the kitchen to get a drink of water. Gibbon has put his gun down once or twice, to throw some wood on the fire, and Barth is just as careless. Come on."

They crept past the tents again, this time far in the rear, and reached the entrance to the ravine beyond the kitchen. The sentry beat ended just above the kitchen. Watching their opportunity, while the sentinels had their backs turned, they crept to the kitchen and lay still. The kitchen consisted of an inclosed space, with the stove on one side, the serving table on wooden horses on another; the other two sides were built of boxes of groceries, forming a sort of cupboard. The drinking water was in a pail on the serving table. It was not long before Gibbon halted to get a drink. In doing so, he leaned his gun against the table. Pat nudged Davis. But they were not ready to act

yet. Gibbon took up his gun and tramped on. He passed Barth who was up from the lower end of the camp. They saluted as they passed. Surely they were doing their duty faithfully. "Lucky" Davis crept a little to one side and returned in a moment with a few crackers, which he had found in one of the boxes. Pat and he ate and waited. At last the sentries faltered. They met near the kitchen, and evidently became thirsty at the same moment. This was the opportunity Pat was waiting for. In a moment two guns were leaning against the table.

Barth, turning to Gibbon, remarked, "Let's throw some wood on the fire."

Together they turned aside to the fire, which was but a short distance away. Pat seized one gun and "Lucky" the other, and by running low and quietly they reached the ravine. The fire, now replenished, allowed them to see the return of the sentries. Barth and Gibbon were searching hopelessly, along the table and on the ground. The guns were gone. Pat and Davis waited to see no more but fastening the guns in the branches of a tree, they crept carefully back to their tents.

The sentries hardly knew what to do. Some one must be about the camp. Possibly some tramps had wandered from the railroad. Per-

haps they had tried to steal provisions, and had found opportunity to take the guns. They decided at last to tell Mr. Sumner. They made their way to Headquarters, and aroused the sleeping Warden. He hastily threw on a dressing gown, and taking an electric candle, he made a tour of the tents. Every boy was there sleeping soundly. In tent six, occupied by McGuire and Davis, there was a gentle snoring.

Mr. Sumner was puzzled. He did not credit the theory of the tramps. He knew possible foragers nearer home who were capable of such conduct. Acting upon the principle that one success would prompt another effort, he determined to learn who might be the jokers. He directed the sentries to follow him. He went to the kitchen, found the flour barrel, and filled a pail with flour. Taking a scoop and a sifter, he carefully spread the flour over a square yard of ground right at the rear flaps of each tent. He did this very quietly and then returned to Headquarters. He told Barth and Gibbon to go back to the Sentry line without guns.

Pat and "Lucky" secure in their tents chuckled over the success of their plan. It filled them with visions of greater deeds. Pat was the first to venture to look out, after Mr. Sumner had made his tour. The sentries were still on duty, and no one else was in sight.

"Let's steal Barth," said Pat. "Why not?"

Davis was reluctant at first as Barth was their tent mate. But Pat was persuasive. Again they crept forth, over the flour, and disappeared in the grove. But a few minutes later Mr. Sumner made a hasty examination of the flour patches. At tent six he stopped. Sure enough, someone had crossed that flour evidently on hands and knees. He threw the light into the tent. Every cot was empty.

With an amused smile, Mr. Sumner hurried to Headquarters and aroused Mr. Jackson. It was but a few minutes' work to carry three cots and boxes from tent six to Headquarters. The tent was almost dismantled by this removal. Barth was then summoned to sleep at Headquarters in his own cot, and Gibbon was sent to bed. Mr. Sumner and Mr. Jackson took guns, and putting on their uniforms, made their way to the sentry line. It was quite dark now and they did not stir up the fire.

Pat and Davis in the meantime, all unconscious of the aroused Wardens, made their plans. They reasoned that Barth would come to the lower end of the beat very hastily, as he would be nervous, and would hasten back to the safer quarter of the bonfire. They were quite surprised to notice as they approached that the guards had guns.

"They have changed the guard," whispered Davis.

"No," answered Pat. "It isn't time. The boys have taken other guns."

"Let's get these, too. We can't steal Barth. He will call out."

Much to their surprise, the guard walked slowly down the beat. He was quite near now. He suddenly leaned his gun against a tree, and went a few feet away, and sat down. This was too much for Pat. Slowly he crept in the shadows to the tree, grasped the gun and crept back. The sentry seemed not to have noticed. Pat went about twenty feet, and had arisen in the dark shelter of some underbrush, when with a suddenness that nearly caused his hair to stand on end with fright, the gun left his hand, as if snatched away. It leaped toward the now alert sentry who said in a firm but not loud voice, "Halt."

But Pat did not halt. Neither did Davis. They hastened into the deeper gloom of the grove. Mr. Jackson pulled in his gun. The cause of its sudden release from Pat's hand was a heavy cord, fastened near the hammer. Mr. Jackson simply pulled the cord at the right moment.

Pat and Davis now returned, thoroughly frightened, to their tent. They crept along,

expecting any moment that the camp would be aroused. With great relief, they crawled through the flaps, and quickly tried to find their beds, before another Warden should appear. It was in vain. There was no bed and no box. They crawled, astonished, about their tent. Not a thing could they find.

"What do you make of this, Pat?" asked "Lucky."

"I think I am dreaming," was Pat's comment. "What's become of our things?"

"They may be in the tree top, too."

At that moment they heard the sound of some one passing. Peeping out they recognized Mr. Sumner, who was pacing up and down the street.

"It's all up," said Pat. But the Warden did not stop.

The boys stretched themselves on the ground and slept as best they could.

Next morning, just as reveille sounded, the Wardens went to each tent and said:

"Prepare for inspection." This meant that the wall of each tent must be rolled up, and the occupants must stand, with guns at "present arms," before the tent.

Tent six presented a curious appearance. The walls were rolled up and two crestfallen boys, Pat and "Lucky," with no guns, stood before

an absolutely empty tent. The whole camp joined in a great laugh.

Nothing was said, however, until later when the Warden read the forfeits.

"McGuire, ten points for leaving tent at night and taking gun.

"Davis, same.

"Barth, five points for releasing gun while on guard.

"Gibbon, same.

"The guns must be returned before drill, or tent number six will remain as it is."

Before drill, Pat and Davis disappeared for a moment, but soon returned carrying two guns.

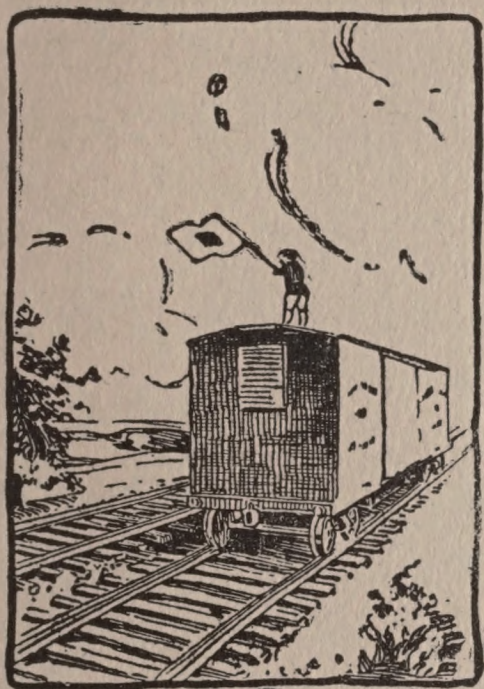
That night they slept again in their own cots.



“THE VISITORS SPENT THE AFTERNOON VERY PLEASANTLY”

CHAPTER X.

VISITORS AND THE SHAM BATTLE.



It was to be visitors' day in camp. Lieutenant Miles had been ordered to meet the morning train with his platoon. They were to go without guns to the station. Before starting, Miles said to Mr. Sumner:

"Will you permit me to use the signal corps this morning?"

Mr. Sumner looked puzzled, but said that he would.

"I should prefer, sir," said Miles, "that our use of the signal corps be kept a secret."

Mr. Sumner promised to say nothing about it. Miles was a trustworthy boy, and Mr. Sumner knew that whatever his purpose was, it would be one of which he could approve.

Art took the signal corps aside, and said:

"See here, you wig-waggers, I want you to help me. I want one of you to stay here in

camp and another to go to the top of the hill, and another to go with me to the station. You must send anything I give you, and give it to Jimmie Harding, I mean Lieutenant Harding."

Sergeant Canfield promptly said that he would go to the station. He sent Brush to the top of the hill with Simpson, and stationed Norris in camp.

Art Miles then sought out Harding. He found him polishing his shoes, brushing his clothes, and otherwise preparing for visitors.

"Jimmie," he said, "this is not a High School Commencement. You needn't dress up. I hardly think Alice will come."

A look of disappointment came into Jimmie's face. Alice Miles, Art's sister, was a girl for whom Jimmie had a secret admiration. Art suspected it.

"Go on," replied Jimmie, recovering, "I don't care who comes. I ought to polish these shoes anyway."

"I am going to the station, Jimmie. If she comes, I will tell her that you have dressed up and walked over to the village."

"If you tell any such fib, I'll take care that Dorothy Potter has plenty of company all day."

Art laughed. He was hoping that Dorothy

would come with the visitors, but he knew that Jimmie would be sufficiently occupied.

"Look here, Jimmie, I want you to help me. I am going to wig-wag some messages to camp from the station. You take them and deliver them."

"All right," said Jimmie, "but," with a grin, "don't send up any false reports about arrivals."

Miles and his platoon were soon on the way, and shortly reached the little station. There was no village at that point, only a few houses. He at once looked about for a convenient place for his signal man. An empty box car stood on a siding, and Miles climbed to the top. The crest of the hill was plainly visible a mile and a half away. Miles called Canfield and stationed him on the car. Canfield waved his signal flag, and in a moment the flag on the hill was seen against the sky. Brush had reached his station. Canfield took his position and soon the flag was waving.

211-12-22-222-111-3. Ready.

Both watched the flag on the hill. It began to dip.

111-12-212. Yes.

Miles took a pencil from his pocket and wrote on a sheet of paper he had brought with him:

“Warden Sumner,
Platoon at station.

Miles.”

Soon the message was being waved, first to the top of the hill and then by Brush to Norris in the camp. Jimmie, good as his word, wrote as Norris announced the letters. Jimmie then went to Headquarters, and found Mr. Sumner. He saluted and handed over the message. When Mr. Sumner read it he glanced up with a puzzled look.

“What in the world is this? Who brought this back?”

The delighted Jimmie exclaimed, “If you will step outside your tent, sir, you may see for yourself.”

Outside, Jimmie pointed to the signalman on the hill, and to the other in the camp.

“There’s one at the station, too.”

“Direct your signalman to send the message, ‘Congratulations from the Wardens to the signal corps.’”

While these messages were being sent the boys were waiting about the station. A train whistled in the distance. It was not the train from Portage, but from Cleveland. When it stopped a middle aged lady stepped off, followed by a younger one. They stood upon the platform of the station for several moments, as

if undecided what to do. Finally the older lady gave such an appealing look toward Lieutenant Miles, that he stepped up, hat in hand.

"We are looking for the 'Young Crusader' camp. Can you direct us?"

"Certainly, madam," answered the polite officer, "I shall be glad to send a boy to show you the way."

"I am Mrs. Marshall," she said, smiling, "and this is my daughter. We have come at the invitation of Mr. Kinsman. Is he at the camp? We first planned to visit here tomorrow. We have come unexpectedly. Could we let him know we are here?"

"Yes, he is at camp, and I shall send him word so that he may expect you."

Art at once selected his most courteous private and told him to conduct Mrs. Marshall and her daughter to the camp. As they started on their way, he hastily climbed to the roof of the box car.

"Quick," he said, "send this message:

"Mr. Kinsman—Mrs. Marshall and daughter walking to camp from station.—Miles."

A few minutes later the train from Portage came in. A great party alighted: mothers, fathers, sisters and brothers of the boys. They were laden with baskets. Miles had his platoon

drawn up at "Attention." When the train had gone, and the group had halted waiting for some direction, Art stepped forward and said:

"I am to have the pleasure of escorting you to the camp."

He saluted, looking directly into the eyes of his smiling sister. With a little bow that brought grins to the faces of the boys, and laughs from others, his sister saluted with a pretty toss of her hand to her forehead and said:

"We are ready to go, Colonel."

Art struggled to control his features but joined in the laugh. He requested a moment's delay, and again hastened to the car.

"Take two messages:

"(1.) Mr. Jackson. Prepare for invaders having well-filled baskets.—Miles."

"(2.) Harding, she is here, also D.—Art."

He then requested the ladies to give their baskets to the soldiers who had come to carry them. He himself selected Dorothy Potter's basket as his burden, and the whole party made its way to the camp.

In the meantime at camp the signals were attracting the interest of the boys. The most surprised man was Mr. Kinsman, who gave one glance at his message, and seizing his hat

made off down the lane and into the road. Very soon he met the two ladies, and their soldier escort. He received a very warm greeting.

"I must apologize, Mrs. Marshall, for not being at the station to meet you and Anna. You wrote me that you would be here tomorrow."

"We understand. We expected to surprise you. How did you get word of our coming, before we reached camp?"

Mr. Kinsman explained about the signalling. After a few minutes Mrs. Marshall said, "I want to sit here for a little while by the roadside to see the beautiful country. You and Anna go on and leave the young soldier with me."

Anna Marshall was a tall girl, about twenty-four years old. Her attractive face and charming manner revealed strong character and frank friendliness. Her beauty was enhanced by the glint of gold in her thick brown hair.

As they walked on slowly, Mr. Kinsman said:

"Anna, I think that it will not be very long before we can be married. I feel that you have been very generous to wait for me."

"I am willing to wait for you, John, as long as necessary. You may be sure of that," and she gave his hand a warm clasp.

They were passing a farm house with an old-

fashioned garden at the side, and Anna exclaimed, "Oh, see the roses. How beautiful they are. I love roses."

"Come on," said her companion eagerly. He turned into the yard and went to the house. It took but a moment to arrange with the farmer's wife, and they soon cut enough to fill a large basket.

The farmer's wife would take no pay. She looked so tired that the sympathetic Anna asked her if she were not well.

"My husband is struggling hard with the farm. He can't get help this summer. We are depending on our strawberries, and they are ready for the early market. We can sell all we have, in Cleveland, if we could get to the market. But we fear that they will all spoil. I am doing what I can, but with the cattle and the chickens and the crops we are worn out."

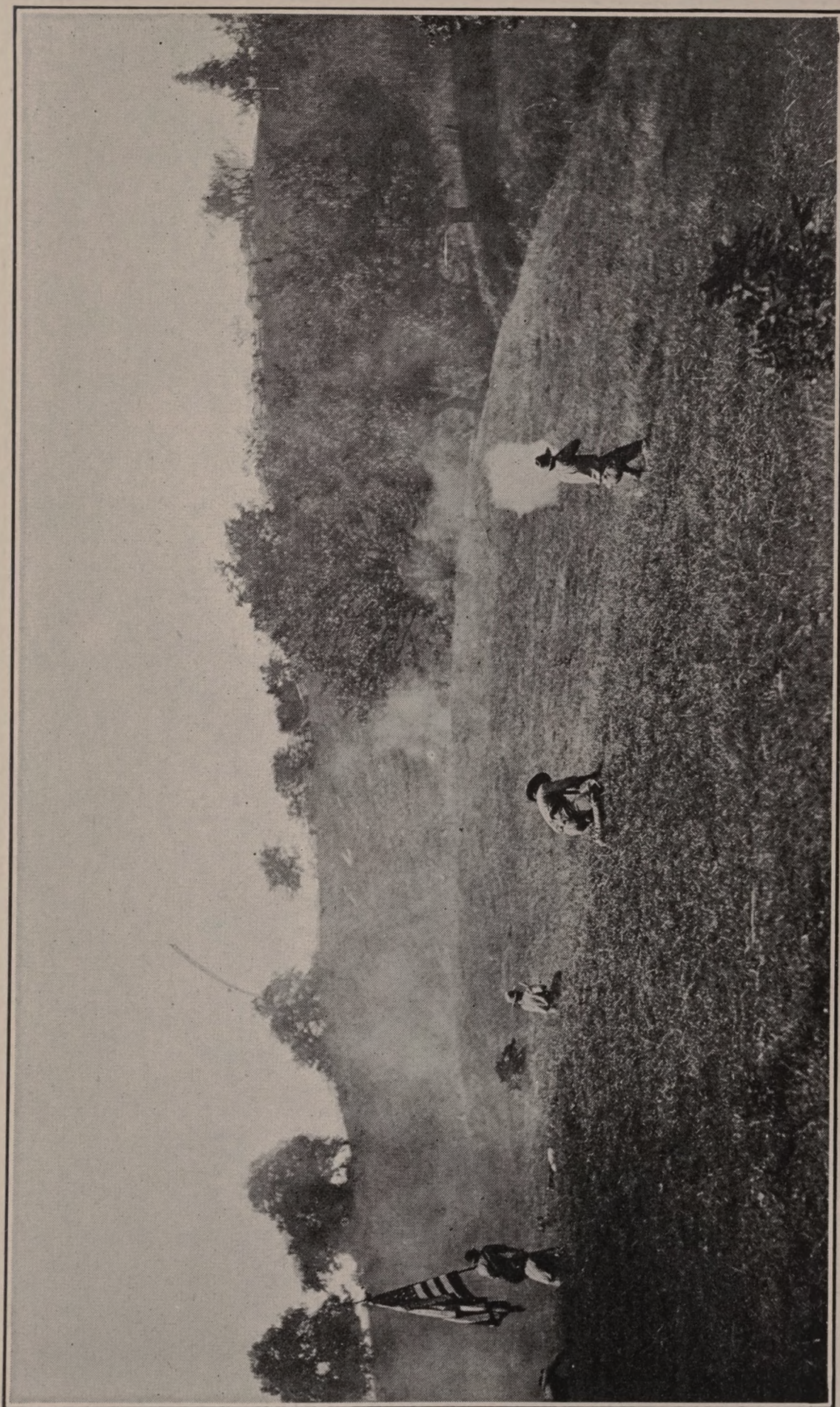
Anna said but little, but as they left she was absorbed in thought. John Kinsman noticed this and asked playfully:

"What are you thinking of, Anna?"

"Something pleasant; wait a minute, please."

Anna went back to the house, talked earnestly with the woman for a short time and then returned.

"John, will you do me a favor?"



“‘FIRE!’ RINGS OUT THE SHARP COMMAND”

"Anything, gladly."

"Thank you. I will tell you what I want later in the day. I must consult mother."

They waited for Mrs. Marshall and then proceeded to the camp. It was not long before other visitors arrived. The remainder of the morning was spent in showing the camp equipment to the interested guests. The boys slyly peeped into baskets. Joe Russell discovered a very delicious pie, and helped himself to a large piece. Tom came upon him as he was finishing it.

"Ah, Tom, this tastes like a June day in an apple orchard."

"You will incite a riot, Joe, if you talk like that. Remember you are an officer."

"I need pie to keep my lip in shape for the bugle," said the satisfied Joe.

After dinner, which was quite different from the ordinary camp dinners, thanks to the visitors, a sort of restless inattention seized the boys. A few took their guns and sauntered off. For half an hour the visitors noticed that the boys were unwilling to go far from their tents. Suddenly from the hill top came the sharp rattle of the firing of guns. The whole camp started up. The sentinel rushed to the Captain and shouted:

"The camp is attacked."

On the Captain's order, "Assembly" was sounded. It took but a moment for the aroused company to line up on the camp street. The orders came thick and fast. Lieutenant Miles led his platoon in double time toward the grove, and Lieutenant Potter led his past the kitchen, toward the slope of the hill flanking the ravine. The firing on the hill was continuous. It was now seen that the attacking party was intrenched near a big tree almost at the top of the hill. The camp defenders had disappeared. Suddenly they filed out from the bushes, which lined the open hill on either side, and with a quick run, crouching low, the two platoons formed a long line, half way up the hill. They now faced the enemy.

"Fire!" rings out the sharp command. A rippling volley follows and the blue smoke arises from each spot where a soldier is lying. On command, they rush forward ten paces, fall flat, fire a volley and push forward again. The long line slowly converges toward the enemy's ambush where the firing is continuous.

Suddenly from the camp a Red Cross Squad hurries out with a stretcher and dashes up to the scene of conflict: a field hospital is established. In the meantime the attacking party has gathered and with a rush gains the hill crest with cheers of victory, capturing the squad in

ambush. Both captors and captured, followed by the Hospital Corps, take their way back to camp. The rapid movements of the young soldiers, together with the rattle of the blank cartridges, the bright color of the flag and the blue smoke floating over the hillside, make a stirring scene.

The younger members of the party of visitors looked on with awe when the company returned. There were many exclamations of delight from the older ones. The first sham battle proved a success.

The boys had their introduction to the new feature of the camp. It was nothing less than a candy store. It had been learned by the Wardens that the boys on their walks were going to a country grocery two miles distant and were there buying such candy as the rural store had in stock. Several had been slightly ill as a result.

There were but two courses open to the Wardens. One was to forbid the purchase of candy. This would be difficult to enforce; it would lead to deception and it would deprive the boys of a pleasure, which was harmless if regulated. Indeed a reasonable supply would have food value, and would serve as a welcome addition to the plain camp fare.

The other course was to provide the candy at

the camp. This the Wardens decided to do. An order was sent to Portage, and a few hours later two large packing cases had arrived at Headquarters. They contained two score paste board boxes of simple wholesome candies. There was a variety great enough to suit every taste.

The Wardens then made these stringent rules. Absolutely no candy was to be purchased outside the camp. Any disregard of this rule would be severely punished. The health of each boy was at stake.

The store would be open for fifteen minutes at Headquarters twice a day, after dinner and after supper. No one might purchase more than five cents worth each time the store opened. The Wardens themselves were in charge.

As it proved, they had a correct notion about the result. A boy getting five cents worth of candy would eat it within an hour after his meal. No harm resulted from this and no appetite lost its keen edge.

The opening of the store was an event. Boys crowded about making their selection. Five cents would buy a great assortment.

"Please give me two cents worth of chocolate, and two cents worth of gum drops, and a stick of peppermint."

"Please give me a penny's worth of cocoanut squares," was the request of one economical boy.

When the boys were satisfied, Dorothy Potter and Alice Miles walked up to the table which served as a counter.

"May we buy some candy, Mr. Jackson?"

"Certainly, this is bargain day for the ladies."

"Oh, good! May we get ten cents worth each? Art and Jimmie are on duty, and have not been able to buy any. We want to surprise them."

"Let me see," said Mr. Jackson. "I'll look up the rules." He pulled a little book from his pocket and pretended to read solemnly:

"Rule 18 of the Young Crusaders."

"Should any one attempt to purchase ten cents worth of candy to share with any one else, such person shall be required to take a short walk about the camp with the Warden in charge."

The girls laughed. "We'll do it."

They selected their candy, and Mr. Jackson placed it in two little sacks.

"There is no charge. This is bargain day, remember. Now we'll take our walk."

They strolled about the camp and Mr. Jackson explained the discipline, the routine and the equipment.

The afternoon was spent very pleasantly.

Jimmie Harding was especially attentive to dainty Alice Miles, and Art found pleasure in the companionship of Dorothy Potter. Together they climbed the hill, with a few others, to get the splendid view over the valley for miles around.

When the candy store opened at night, Mr. Sumner noticed Larry Brush hovering about, but buying nothing.

"Larry, don't you like candy?" Larry turned shyly away saying, "Oh, yes sir."

"Come here, Larry." Larry obeyed.

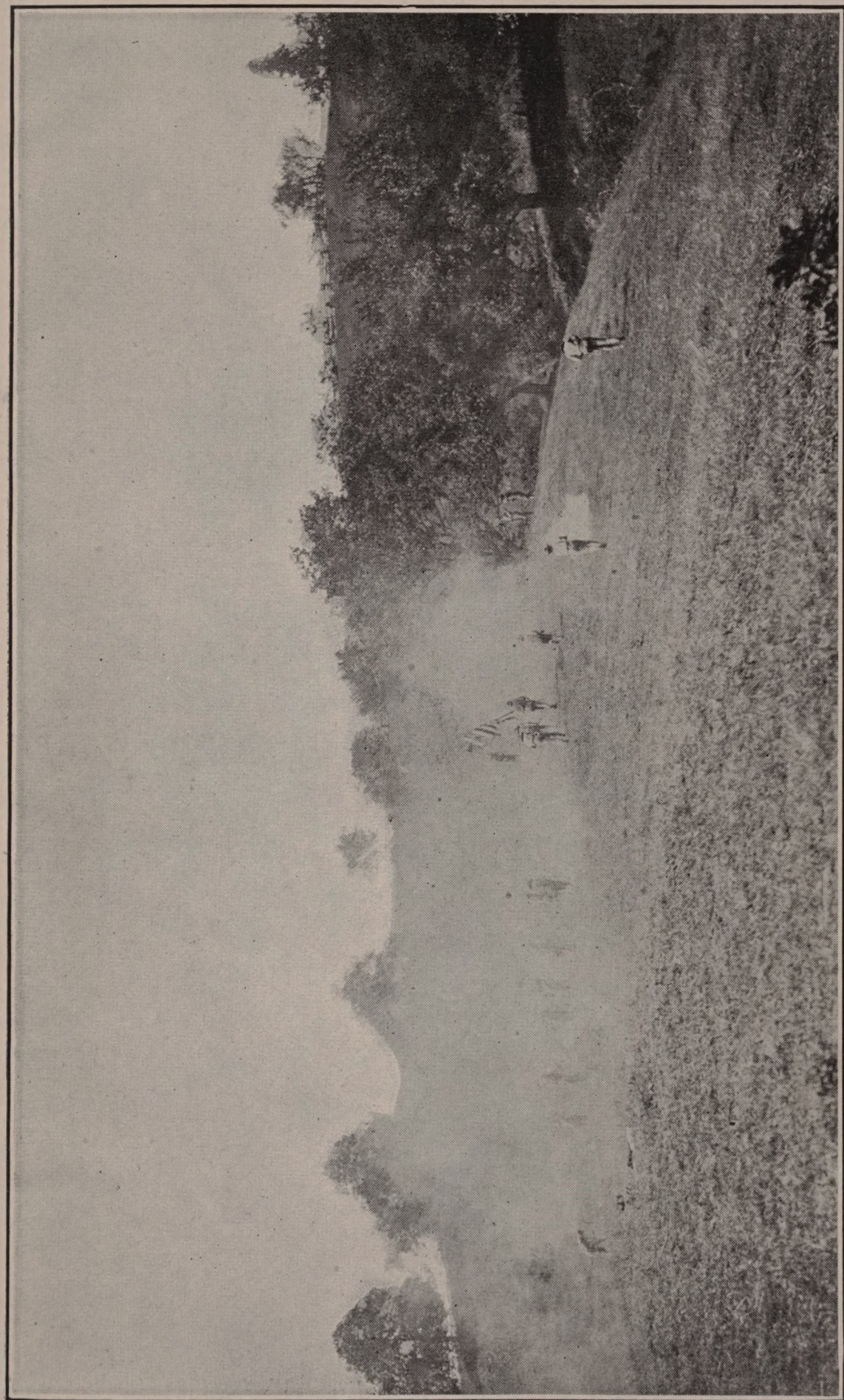
"Are you short of funds, son?"

"I didn't bring any money with me, Mr. Sumner."

"Well, Larry, I am not surprised. Never thought of a candy store in the woods, eh? By the way, I noticed that your set of fours does not get enough to do. I'll have to set you boys to work. You come now and help me put away these boxes. I'll make this your regular duty. Look here, Larry. I'll make a bargain. You attend to this each day, and take your five cents worth, as clerk hire. How about it?"

"Thank you, sir. I'll be glad to do it," and a little sweet tooth was satisfied all during camp.

Mr. Kinsman and Anna Marshall took a long walk and discussed their plans for the fu-



"THE LONG LINE SLOWLY CONVERGES TOWARD THE ENEMIES' AMBUSH"

ture. As the time came for the visitors to depart he said:

"Anna, you were to give me the pleasure of doing you a favor."

"Yes, and I am about to ask it. Mother and I will remain for several days at the farm house where we stopped this morning."

Mr. Kinsman's astonishment and delight were evident. "Now, what I want is this. Will you give me command of your company, next Monday?"

John Kinsman was no less astonished at this request. But so animated was her manner, so eager her desire that he could but reply,

"They are yours to command, dear."

That evening when he escorted mother and daughter to the farm house she unfolded her plan for the day on which she was to have command. It did credit to her generous heart. In a moment Mr. Kinsman became enthusiastic and as he left her he said, "We shall not fail. Good-night."

CHAPTER XI.

THE IMPROMPTU CONTEST.



The excitement of visitors' day and the unaccustomed dainties which had been brought in the baskets, and eaten by the boys, made them restless and alert. A larger group than usual gathered about the fire after supper. There was much discussion of the events of the day and also of

the coming prize drill for the boy best trained in the manual of arms.

There was one boy in camp, Hamilton, who had an exalted idea of his own skill in this respect. He had been so sure of his ability to take the prize offered by the Wardens that he had not been reluctant to speak of it.

"You fellows will have no chance if I enter this contest," was his joking comment.

"Oh, go on, Hammy," replied Ross. "You don't know enough about a gun to hurt you."

"Hammy never saw a gun until he joined the club," added Barth.

"I guess I did," was Hammy's indignant answer. "I have handled more guns than all the rest of you put together."

"Perhaps you were in the Revolutionary War, Hammy? Do you get a pension?"

"My father was in the Civil War, and he doesn't get a pension, either."

"That makes you a veteran, Hammy."

"Well, I'll show you fellows. You are a stuck up bunch," he said, hotly. "If there's any fellow here thinks he knows this manual of arms better than I do, let him make good."

"Don't get mad, Hammy," said Ross. But Hammy was mad. He got up, and strutted off to his tent, without a word. Hamilton was not exactly popular, because of his superior airs.

"Say, do you fellows know that Hamilton went to Mr. Kinsman and said that unless he became an officer soon, he would leave camp?" It was Brown who spoke.

"No, is that so?" "What a guy," and other expressions came in chorus.

Suddenly Dick Brewer jumped up.

"I must see Blewie. Come on, Fred."

Fred Ewing, the boy addressed, got up, too. No one noticed that a moment later Jimmie Harding also disappeared in the direction of

the cook's tent. Brewer had quietly whispered to him to follow.

Blewie was cleaning up the kitchen. When he was busy, he had no time for boys. His expansive moments were after work was done, and he reclined his great bulk in a low chair beside the little fire he kept burning near his tent.

Ewing, Brewer and Harding settled down on the grass near that fire. They talked in whispers and very earnestly. Now and then they broke in a subdued laugh. That a conspiracy was on foot was apparent.

Blewie soon finished his work and joined them.

"Look a hyar, you boys. Caint you'uns poke a stick or two on that fire, while you ah waiting? I know you. You got your heads together, contrapin' some vill'ny. Ef yo' try any of yo' carnsarnedness on dis chicken, I'll smote you." And Blewie waved a big arm and smiled at the group, but with a questioning glance, as if to learn their real purpose.

"Blewie," asked Jimmie, "were you in the war?"

Blewie raised an arm as if to ward off a blow, and ducked his head.

"Say, chile, doan yo' know dat whereber dar am rumors of wah, I git out and lose myself

in de woods until dose rumors are disinfected by de statesmen down in Washington? Neber had serious wah but once, and dat was 'tween me and some Eyetalians."

"Tell us how it was, Blewie."

"Well, I doan reckon I'm very proud of it, but I'll tell you. You know dat man in Portage, dat digs up de streets every time dey gets 'em nicely paved; seems 's though I doan come by his name, jes now."

"Was it Johnson, the contractor, Blewie?"

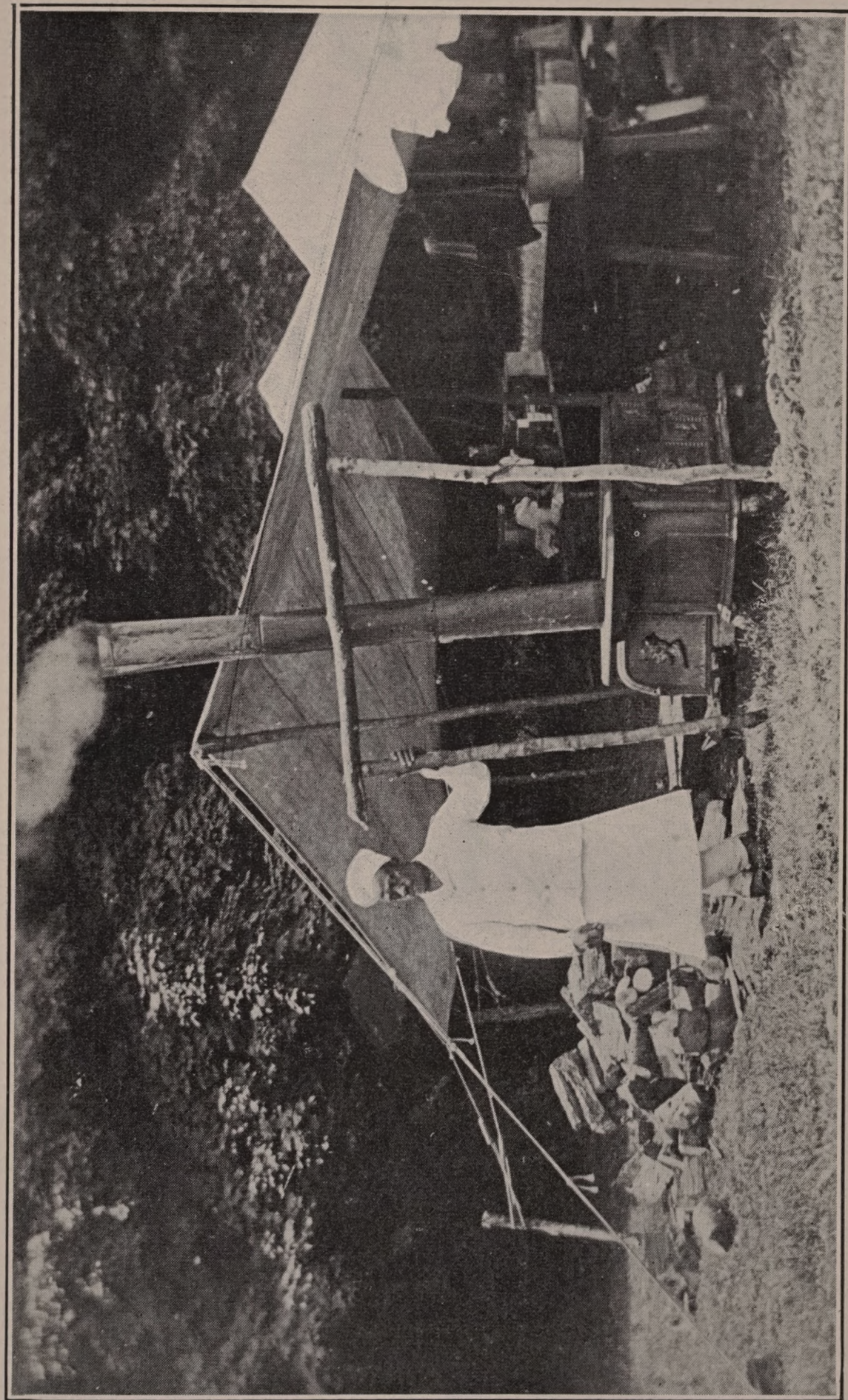
"You am a fine guesser, son; dat am de very gemman hisself. I wuz walkin' down de street and dis contracker, he stop me and sez, sez he: 'Hey, Barker, kin you all git me fo' or five Eyetalians to dig a ditch for me tomorrow? I'll give you two dollars.' I reckoned I c'd git dose Eyetalians, cos Eyetalians were as thick out my way as weeds in a parson's garden, so I says, 'You're on, Mister Johnsing.' He tells me to bring 'em to de co'ner by de bank nex' mornin' at nine.

"Well, I goes out and I gits five Eyetalians, and de nex' mornin' I brung 'em to de bank, 'bout nine, and I looks up and down for dat contracker. Putty soon, when he didn't come, I got sort of narvus, for dose Eyetalians were jabberin' away, sounding like a difference of opinion at a woman's club. When it comes

half past nine, I jes felt it in my bones dat de contracker would neveh come, and dat he was makin' a monkey of me. I says to myself, 'Dis am suhtenly a doughnut. How's I to break loose from dose Eyetalians?' I waited a few minutes more. Den I said, 'Boys, I'll go telefun dat contracker.' So I lit out and went down de street and slid into de alley, and hid myself in a liv'ry stable.

"Putty soon I sent one of dose stable boys wot I knew, to discover if dose Eyetalians had dispersed theirselves. He reported dey was still thar, and still a jabberin' and a lookin' putty mad. So I dug under de hay, and waited thar till dahk. I didn't want my 'natomy scalped by one of dose Eyetalian corn shuckers, wot dey carried. After dark I ambled out to my home, keepin' in de shadows. Nex' day I went on my vacation. One of my neighbors told me dat dose fellows war goin' to black han' me.

"When I came back, I saw dat contracker, and stepped up and said: 'Boss, I got youah Eyetalians. Whar's my money?' He gave me a look, and said, with a big laugh, 'You're easy, Barker. You should collec' it from de Eyetalians.' But I didn't relish dat job, so I kept sort of quiet until dey got work on de railroad. Dat's de nearest I came to ever bein' in a war."



“THE CAMP KITCHEN, ACROSS THE CREEK LAY AT THE EDGE
OF A WOODED SLOPE”

The boys asked Blewie for more stories, but he didn't respond. They then told him of their plans, swearing him to secrecy.

Next day they were unusually busy. During the leisure hours of the morning, and after the skirmish, they were gone from camp a long time. About half past four in the afternoon, there strolled into camp a group of farmer boys from the neighborhood. They loitered around, interested in the camp. Finally, Jimmie Harding said to Frank Merrill:

"Sergeant Merrill, assemble your set of fours, and escort these visitors about the camp. Let them see everything."

Merrill did so. Art Hamilton was in the set of four boys. They approached the country lads, and Merrill said he would be glad to show them the camp. One of the half dozen boys replied:

"I'd like to see one of them there guns."

"Hamilton, please let our guest inspect your gun."

The visitor took the gun, and examined it.

"Shucks," he said, "you couldn't hit a squirrel with this gun."

"It's not for shooting, but for drill," replied Hamilton, haughtily.

"For drill, eh," slowly drawled the boy, who was dressed in a pair of overalls, wore a red

neckerchief, and a rough straw hat on his head. His face and hands were somewhat dirty. He had been addressed as Eph by one of the smaller boys.

"Yes, drill," said Hammy smartly.

"Do you mean that there throwing your gun around on your shoulder and such like?"

"Yes, I mean the manual of arms."

"Let me see yuh do it."

A crowd had assembled by this time. There was nothing bashful about Hamilton. He was delighted to show his graceful drill to the rustics. He took the gun while Jimmie gave the orders. Rapidly he went through the manual of arms.

"Say neighbor," said Eph. "I think I kin do that. Let me try. Bet'cher I can do it."

"Of course you can't do it," responded Hammy.

"Tell yer what I'll do. Ef I kin do it as well as you can, will yer give me one of them shiny buttons on yer coat? I'll let the crowd be the judge." Hammy amused, and somewhat disdainful, agreed.

Most of the boys were watching and grinning. The farmer lads in the center of the group stood with open mouths. Even the Wardens had come out to see the fun.

Hamilton stood with his gun ready. Eph turned and said slowly,

"Which of you fellers will let me take his cannon?"

Several were offered at once. Eph took one, and finally stood opposite Hammy, his shoulders slouched forward and his feet far apart. He still had the gun in both hands.

"Ready," said Harding.

"Attention." At this word Hammy smartly drew up into the alert position of the soldier. But Eph remained as he was.

"Be that a command to do something with the gun?"

"That means to take the position of a soldier, ready to drill," explained Hammy.

"Say, General," drawled Eph, "give us that again will you, and blaze away."

Jimmie, ready to burst with restrained laughter, again gave the command. Eph gave one look at Hammy and slowly stood erect, feet together and placed his gun at order arms.

"Carry Arms." No sooner was the command given than both boys with an alert movement brought the guns to the position of carry. Every one opened his eyes with amazement at the readiness and grace with which Eph executed the command. Hammy was dumbfounded. A slow red began to creep into his

face. The orders came in quick succession.

"Right Shoulder, Arms.

"Carry, Arms.

"Port, Arms.

"Carry, Arms."

Rapidly they went through the manual. Eph drilled with astonishing ease and skill. Hammy was so confused at being in a real contest that he suddenly came to "carry" from "right shoulder," when the command was "port." A great shout arose. "You've lost, Hammy." "Give him the button." "You're all right, Eph." "Hand over the button, Hammy."

The discomfited Hammy unfastened a button and with a sheepish grin handed it to Eph. Eph, as he took it, pulled away his hat and a big bunch of false red hair, and disclosed the black locks and familiar features of Fred Ewing. A shout of utter amazement arose from the whole crowd.

Hamilton looked at Ewing absolutely stunned. Muttering "You're too smart," he went toward his tent. Fred received a small ovation. How he had reddened his dark eyebrows and made his mouth appear so large was a matter of deepest wonder. Fred explained that with the aid of an actor's make-up box owned by Brewer he had done the business.

After a few minutes, Fred went after Hammy, and holding out his hand said,

"Hammy, old boy, you drilled beautifully. Here is your button. You got rattled for a minute. I hope you win the prize."

Hamilton took Fred's hand and laughed, slapping Fred on the back. The crowd gave three cheers for Hammy, three for Fred and then took the genuine farmer boys, who helped in the plot, and gave them all the good things to eat they could find in the camp, answering scores of questions. And later, although he said no more about his skill, Hammy *did* take the prize at the contest.

CHAPTER XII.

FUN AND FROLIC.



On Saturday night the boys were in high spirits. They felt the satisfaction of having labored earnestly during the week. "Happy" Potter secured a squad dressed up in every conceivable sort of uniform and marched it about the camp, singing any old song that they knew.

Emil Durr had caught a couple of small fish in the river and he was preparing them for his breakfast amidst much adverse criticism as to his skill as a fisherman. Fred Rawdon was practicing on a bugle in his tent, ambitious to become an understudy to Joe, and the weird sounds that came from that tent invited the wrath of the musical upon Fred's head.

Frank Merrill and a few cronies upon the hillside were plotting some mischief. Their plot evidently was carried out, for later, after

taps, Tent 4 suddenly collapsed upon the struggling occupants, the tent ropes having been loosened.

The Red Cross squad was practicing emergency runs with its stretcher, which consisted of two poles and a blanket. To make the stretcher, the blanket was placed on the ground, and the poles laid across so that the blanket was divided into three equal sections. One side was then folded over the pole onto the center, and the other side similarly folded. The "victim" was placed on the blanket thus folded, and the weight of his body kept the blanket from slipping. Two boys, one at each end of the poles, easily carried the whole weight.

The nights had grown cold and some of the boys had complained that they had not been kept warm by their blankets, so Art Miles and Jimmie Harding were conducting an out-of-door instruction, as to how to make up a cot. They had taken a cot out into the street and some boys were gathered about it.

"You see, children," began Art, assuming the attitude of a well known High School teacher, which raised a laugh, "the trouble is that you do not understand that you must have as much clothing beneath you as above you, on a cot. The cot has no warm mattress.

"Now that you have learned that point, chil-

dren, we will proceed. You take blanket No. 1 and you will see that it is twice as wide as the cot. Place it unfolded on the cot so that half of it hangs over the front edge and onto the ground." Here Art, with Jimmie's aid, suited his action to his word.

"You have learned that thoroughly! To proceed. You take blanket No. 2 and place it in the same manner, one half on the cot and the rest of it hanging to the ground behind the cot; this puts two folds of blankets beneath you.

"You now take your sheet and place it as you placed blanket No. 2; having done so you fold blanket No. 2, with the sheet, back over the cot; thus blanket No. 2, lined by the sheet, forms a pocket.

"Having proceeded thus far, you step to the end of your cot, and fold under about six inches of blanket No. 2 and sheet, so that the chilly blasts will not strike your tootsie wootsies.

"You are now ready to retire. Come here, Pat."

They placed Pat, clothes and all, in the fold of blanket No. 2.

"Now you will reach out and carefully draw the part of blanket No. 1 from the ground and fold it over blanket No. 2, and likewise over yourself. You are now ready for sweet

dreams. On three sides you are hermetically sealed, with no place where Jack Frost may creep in and make goose flesh, to betray your true nature."

In spite of Art's manner the lesson was sincere, and the boys learned something worth knowing.

In the meantime Pat between the blankets began to give every sign of going to sleep.

"Get out of here, ye nuisances," called Pat as the boys began to prod him. "Can't ye let a fellow sleep?"

The boys took hold of the cot and turned it on edge, rolling Pat out on the ground. He arose pretending great anger and began to strike out left and right. Every one stayed out of reach. Pat suddenly lunged and seized Fred Ewing. He hurled him upon the blankets and quickly rolled him up in them.

"Quick, quick, Hospital Corps," called Pat.

The Hospital Corps, practicing nearby, raced to the spot.

"Here is a raving maniac, hold him fast." Entering into the fun they seized the struggling boy and quickly placed him on the stretcher. Three boys on either side held him fast. They ran toward the kitchen.

"He's fainted," shouted Pat, "bring water."

Ewing struggled to get free. Ross got a bucket

of water and Pat was about to hurl it on Ewing when Mr. Kinsman appeared. This stopped Pat, and the momentary diversion permitted Ewing to free himself. He rushed for Pat and tripped him. Pat and the bucket of water tumbled to the ground. Ewing laughing, by this time, called out,

"First down, ten yards to gain," as Pat arose grinning.

Mr. Kinsman said, "That will do, boys, you must not carry a joke too far."

"Ah! it's a good old time we're having, Mr. Kinsman," said Pat, and he slapped Fred heartily on the back.

So about the camp there were pranks and fun until bed time.

Sunday morning dawned clear and beautiful. The usual routine was omitted, except the necessary work of cleaning the camp. Many visitors were expected for the day.

After breakfast Mr. Sumner noticed a group of boys near one of the tents. They were laughing heartily at something going on within. He stepped over to see what it was and a ludicrous sight met his eyes. There was "Happy" Potter dressed up to represent a barber. He had put on the white coat of his pajamas to represent a barber's coat, and he was flourishing a brush of lather. Inwood was seated on a camp chair,

a towel about his neck. Potter rapidly spread the lather over Inwood's face, not being careful to avoid his mouth, and then he drew out of his box a razor. Quickly he scraped it over Inwood's smooth cheek. That blood did not follow was probably due to the condition of the razor. "Happy" then snatched away the towel, dumped Inwood off the chair and called out "Next."

Someone said Durr needed a hair cut.

It was only too true, and Durr was hastily pushed to the chair. He submitted, seeing it was useless to resist. Quickly Potter put on the towel and taking a pair of scissors and a comb actually began to make inroads upon Durr's overlong locks. "Happy" was cautious, however, and took off but a little at a time. He proceeded carefully, and soon Durr had a hair cut, which if not artistic, was at least an improvement.

"Happy" then proceeded to pour witch hazel on Durr's head, and to rub it, in a really professional style. His exaggerated imitations greatly amused the watching boys.

No one else was found who needed attention from the barber, so the shop closed for the day.

The visitors came about ten. Mothers and fathers, brothers and sisters, cousins and aunts, came swooping down upon the camp. Anxious

mothers looked about for damp bed clothing, while small brothers examined the guns. There was also much visiting and unpacking of baskets. The boys had their dinner early and then the tables were turned over to the guests. Blewie was put to rout by a group of mothers who took command of the kitchen, made coffee and warmed up the contents of their baskets. Dinner for the guests was soon served.

After dinner there was a service under the trees near the grove. The Rector of the Church of our Saviour at Portage, who had many friends among the boys, had come with the visitors and he conducted the service. Familiar hymns were sung and Evening Prayer was said. Prayer Books had been provided for all. The Rector preached a short sermon.

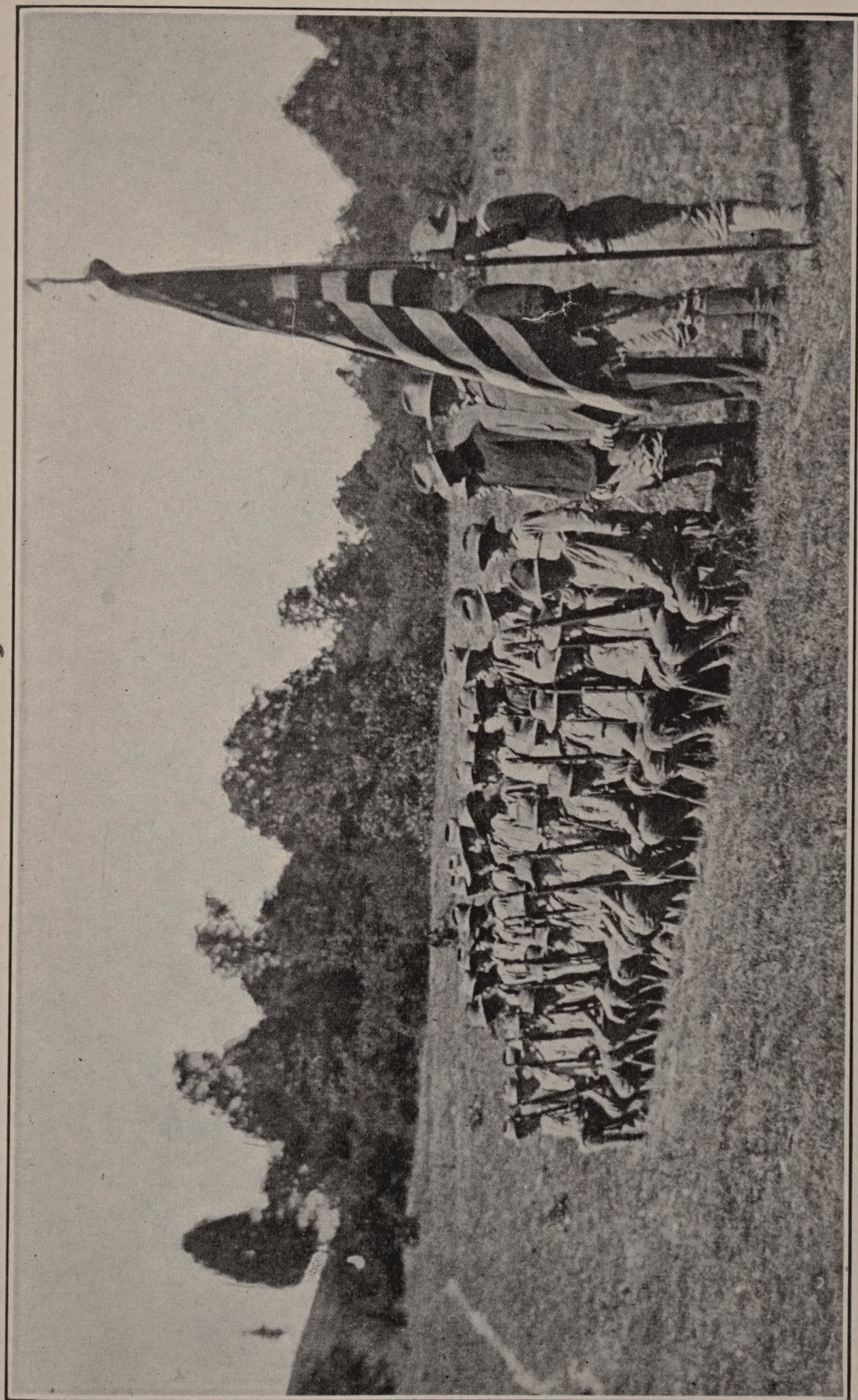
The visitors returned to town about half past three, several of the boys going to the train with them.

Mr. Kinsman and Mr. Jackson sat by Headquarters discussing the day's events.

"Sunday is a hard day in camp. The boys miss the usual routine and drill."

"Yes, and it will be hard to occupy them from now on."

"They seem to be rather listless now that the visitors have gone. They find the time dragging."



"THE YOUNG CRUSADERS AT 'CHURCH'"

"Well," said Mr. Kinsman, "it is worse for boys to be idle than occupied decently. I shall propose something. 'Dick,'" he called to Brewer, who was walking aimlessly about the camp street. "Why don't you go swimming?"

Dick's face lighted up. "May we?"

"Surely," said Mr. Kinsman. Dick hurried off with the news. In a moment the listlessness vanished and they all started for the swimming hole. Mr. Jackson went with them.

In the evening the camp resumed its usual interests, but Mr. Kinsman took a chair out by the fire, and a group of boys soon surrounded him and asked questions and listened to his experiences.

"Yes," he said in answer to a question, "I played baseball in college. I was not a good hitter but I had a temporary reputation as one. It came in this way. It was in my Freshman year, and I had just made the team. We were playing with the State University. The score in the ninth was 3 to 1 in their favor. There was a man on first and two out when I came to bat. Everyone thought it was all over, and they were getting up to leave. A freshman was not the man to save the game. I knew that the next batter was one of the best on the team. I thought that if I could get a base on balls he would have a chance, so I waited. The pitcher

for 'State' pitched two balls, and then one strike; another ball and another strike made it three balls and two strikes. The next ball pitched would either give me the base or strike me out and lose us the game. As it came I saw it was going to be good so I swung at it. By good luck I hit it and sent it between first and second for a base hit. The crowd then gave a cheer, and began to take interest. The next batter struck out and we were left on the bases. We lost the game but I won a reputation. I lost it at the next game.

"That reminds me of the story of our pitcher and how he held office," he continued. "Our college was in a small village surrounded by farms. Every year each voter was expected to work on the roads. Many of the college boys were voters but disliked this duty. They evaded it whenever they could, but sooner or later they were caught by the township officials and fined. This made bad feeling between the students and the officials, so whenever a student indulged in some college prank he was caught by the village constable and brought before the justice of the peace. The sentence was generally a heavy fine. The boys grew tired of this, and at the next election they had their own candidate for justice. It was the pitcher of our team. Every voter in the college, regardless

of politics, voted for him and he was elected.

"We thought we were safe then, but we found that he was taking the job seriously, and we were fined as usual but not unjustly as before. He made a good official and managed to restore peace between the boys and the township authorities."

Mr. Kinsman related many other experiences to the eager boys. Finally "Tattoo" sounded and the camp became quiet for the night.

Ted Potter had gone to Dick Brewer's tent to spend the night, exchanging cots with Inwood. As they lay, buried to their chins in the bed clothes, Ted said in a low voice:

"It gets awfully quiet around here when everyone has gone to bed."

Dick raised himself up on his elbow.

"Do you hear the rumble of that train, Ted? It must be almost to Portage. It passed here a long time ago."

"Sounds carry a long distance on a night like this."

"I sometimes wonder how it would feel to be all alone in this little tent, at midnight."

"You would wish yourself back in Portage, Dick," was Ted's decision. "Those old trees would cast shadows that would seem like ghosts dancing all over the place."

Dick got up and raised the flap of the tent.

"Look out here, Ted. Don't the stars seem nearer to us out here in the woods? Seems as if they were right over the tree tops. It always sets me thinking to look at the stars on a night like this."

Ted had arisen and was staring out of the tent.

"I have been wondering, Dick, how it is that we kids can be out here, with all these old trees and see these stars every night, and never give them a second thought. It must have taken an awful long time to make this old world. Do you think a boy is worth as much as a star?"

"I guess he is, Ted. They haven't a heart to love any one with. They haven't any father and mother, who take care of them. It seems to me that a boy who has all these things has had a good deal more done for him than a star."

"But they keep on shining, Dick, and we die."

"That's because shining is all they can do. But we get better, and we know more as we grow older. Nothing makes any impression on a star. Everything around us helps us. See what we have learned since we came here. That looks useless unless we were going to outlive the stars. Why, Ted," and Dick sat on the edge of his cot, "do you think that your

mother isn't going to love you to the end of eternity? We are going to school in this world to learn what's going to help us when we die."

Ted stood a long time in silence. He said at length slowly, "I guess you are right. But we don't seem to live up to that, do we? We sort of take better care of our things, this old gun for instance, than we do of some of these other boys. And yet they are going to live on when this old gun is rusted away. That isn't right."

"Of course it isn't right. That's why we are here. We are learning to help take care of each other. This camp isn't for fun. Do you think you will ever forget the kids that are here? You won't. Some of these kids are having a piece of Ted Potter and Dick Brewer woven into their characters in this camp, and we're getting a piece of Warren and Harding and Miles. The fellow that's giving his best is the one that's doing most for our club. Those fellows will have something of this camp in them when those stars are cold."

Ted made his way back to his cot. "That means we've got to make a good contribution, doesn't it, Dick, old boy? Well, you're doing it. I'm cold. Good-night, Dick."

"Good-night, Ted. I am glad we've got a guard out there."

"So am I."

CHAPTER XIII.

STRAWBERRIES AND UNEXPECTED GUESTS.



Early Monday morning Anna Marshall appeared in camp. The company was at breakfast. Immediately after breakfast "Assembly" was sounded and the boys wondered what was to happen. Mr. Kinsman stepped before the company and said:

"Miss Marshall has asked as a special favor that she have control of the company for one day. I have granted this request and we stand ready to do as she asks."

Contrary to all military discipline, there was a loud clapping of hands. Miss Marshall had made herself a general favorite with the boys, by her simplicity, her good nature and her interest in the camp. She had visited each tent on Sunday and each boy had been introduced to her. It was with a very bright face and glistening eye, that she received the announce-

ment and listened to the applause. She stepped to Mr. Kinsman and said quietly,

"Will you please explain what I want to do?"

"If you insist," was his smiling reply. "Miss Marshall has found a family in this neighborhood in a serious predicament. Mr. Winter, who lives in the house on the road to the station has been unable to get sufficient help in his garden this spring. He has a mortgage on his house nearly paid. The last payment of one hundred and fifty dollars falls due on Friday. He has no means of meeting it. He has an abundant crop, but there is no one to gather it. If he could obtain sufficient help he could easily sell his products and pay off his mortgage. But he cannot get workers. Miss Marshall and her mother have been staying there and Miss Marshall has thought of a plan by which we can assist. Everyone who is willing to spend this day as Miss Marshall wishes, will take one step forward."

As one man, the whole company stepped forward. Even the Wardens did so. Then Miss Marshall went to Captain Warren, saying,

"I thank you and your company. If you will follow me we shall soon be at work."

She started toward the lane. Quickly Captain Warren gave the necessary commands and the company followed. Only the guard was

left at the camp. They swung into the road and toward the station. Upon reaching the farm house, they halted. Mr. Winter was at the large gate. This he opened and the company marched into the yard.

Upon halting Mr. Kinsman explained their work. Mr. Winter had a great field of strawberries. They had ripened but there was no one to pick them. He had an agreement with a Cleveland firm of commission merchants. They would take every berry he could send and pay twelve cents a quart for them. Miss Marshall had sent for quart boxes. A great pile of them was upon the front porch of the farm house. The boys were to go to the field and pick berries.

Quickly and systematically it was arranged. Each boy was to take a quart box and as soon as he filled it, he was to give it to one of the Wardens who would place it in a convenient crate and give the picker a new box. As each crate was filled, Mr. Winter would carry it to the yard and load it upon a wagon.

No game was ever undertaken with more zest than this contest against the mortgage. Mr. Winter was a quiet man who fully appreciated all that was being done for him. He tried in every way to show his gratitude. Mrs. Winter sent out plate after plate of ginger bread, and

pitchers of fresh milk. All the little Winters were picking too. Soon the full boxes began to come in. Miss Marshall went into the field and spoke to each boy, urging him to be careful of the vines and to leave no ripe berries.

The first crate was filled, and a cheer arose as Mr. Winter carried it to the wagon. The field was very large, for Mr. Winter had centered his whole interest in his berries.

Very soon Leo Inwood appeared before Miss Marshall, with a very large berry. As he presented it, holding it on the stem, he said,

"Please eat it, Miss Marshall." But Anna had a better idea.

"May I keep it for awhile and see if you can bring me a larger one?"

Leo gracefully assented. Soon another boy appeared with one that was larger than Inwood's. Miss Marshall accepted this also. A contest then began, and large berries began to accumulate. Anna got a box, and placed them all in it. Each new berry was compared with the largest in the box. Former champions were quickly replaced at first, by larger rivals. But Joe Russell brought one huge berry that bade fair to hold the first place, for all time. Soon the box was filled, and presented by Mr. Winter to Mrs. Marshall.

Meanwhile the crates were being filled, and

soon the wagon was loaded. Mr. Jackson volunteered to take it to the station and get the berries off to Cleveland on the noon train. A shipping tag was tied to each crate. Mr. Jackson accomplished this errand and was jogging back to the farm in the one horse wagon. He had on his old clothes that day, with a blue flannel shirt, and a big straw hat borrowed from Mr. Winter. The usually well dressed Warden seemed to be one of the sons of the soil.

As he was thinking of the possible result of the day's work, a great touring car came whirling up behind him. He drew to one side, but the touring car did not pass. On the contrary, it came to a stop, beside Mr. Jackson's humble wagon.

In the car were two men, one very fat and jolly looking, the other grave and dignified. There were also three ladies. Mr. Jackson reined in his horse and lifted his hat politely. The large fat man stood up in the car and with an elaborate bow, and a very cordial smile addressed Mr. Jackson as follows:

"Noble son of mother earth, would you be so kind as to delay your chariot and prancing steed long enough to inform us if this is the road to the prosperous and beautiful city of the lakes, Cleveland?"

One of the girls, with an embarrassed smile,

which Mr. Jackson did not fail to see, remonstrated,

"Oh father, don't talk like that."

This interruption gave Mr. Jackson a moment to recover his self possession. Leaning toward the automobile, and putting his hand beside his ear, he said with a strong nasal accent:

"Hey?"

"Ah," said the jovial fat man, "I must speak louder." He raised his voice somewhat, and said:

"Would'st be so kind, true, generous hearted countryman, as to inform five forlorn wayfarers if this stately boulevard is the proper road to yonder port of Cleveland?"

Mr. Jackson assumed a puzzled look, scratched his head, cast a sly glance at the girl who had spoken, and slowly pulled a few matches from his pocket. He held them out, with a nod, saying:

"Always glad to accommodate a stranger."

Everyone laughed. The fat man took them with a bow, and handed one to each of his party. Then he stepped closer, and resting his hands on the side of the car, leaned over toward the Warden.

"Generous sir," he almost shouted, while Mr. Jackson again put his hand to his ear, and

leaned far toward the questioner, "I appreciate your courtesy. But may I ask again, strong son of earth's turbulent plowed fields, if in pursuing our way, o'er hill and dale upon our present course, we shall be greeted by the breezes that blow softly over Erie's gentle waves upon the stately city of Cleveland?"

Mr. Jackson was leaning nearer and nearer. When this speech was ended, he arose, made a profound bow, and looking first at the fat man, and then at the attractive daughter, he began,

"Wayfarers through our peaceful valley, why should you hasten to the sordid crowded streets of clanging cities? Know you not the words of Keats?

"To one who has been long in city pent
'Tis very sweet to look into the fair
And open face of heaven, to breathe a prayer
Full in the smile of the blue firmament.

"Restrain your restless car, oh kindly courtier, whose gentle words retain the glow of the golden days of great Elizabeth. Learn from a simple rustic the art of quietude. This road leads not to Cleveland, but for me it leads to luncheon, and a happy hour."

The young ladies clapped their hands, and the fat man laughed loud and heartily. He

held out a hand, which was cordially grasped by Mr. Jackson, who was now blushing. The grave man was looking at him with interest and the elderly lady, evidently the mother of the young ladies, was smiling.

"Well met, young man," he said. "Where did you learn to do that?"

"From you, I think," replied Mr. Jackson.

"You're beaten, Hoyt," said the grave man. "Better pay up."

"I will. Will you take lunch with us? We have a basket full of things. My name is Hoyt, and this is my wife, Mrs. Hoyt, and my daughters, Miss Marion and Miss Catherine Hoyt. This is Mr. Patterson."

Mr. Jackson bowed, and said, "My name is Jackson. I should be pleased to take lunch with you, but my duty calls me. May I suggest that a mile farther on will be found a very delightful place for you to stop for your luncheon?"

"By all means," said Mr. Hoyt. "We shall be glad to follow your advice, especially if it will give us the pleasure of your company."

"Your defective hearing must be a great annoyance to you, Mr. Jackson," said the mischievous Miss Marion.

"Oh, it is only defective when my sense of sight is unusually alert." He paused a moment,

and then added, "You know that such a fine automobile is a rare sight in the country."

Miss Marion looked at him doubtfully. Then Miss Catherine took up the question.

"Do you find it pleasant to live in the country?"

The Warden looked troubled, but replied:

"One of its pleasures is lack of lamp posts."

"How is that?"

"There is no place for street signs. Everyone has to stop and make inquiry as to highways."

By this time they were all ready to start. The horse trotted on ahead and the automobile followed. Turning in at Mr. Winter's gate they came upon a festive scene. The boys were eating lunch on the lawn. Anna Marshall was talking with animation about the morning's work. She had fascinated the whole company by her charm and inspired them with her enthusiasm. As the automobile swung into the yard, all turned in surprise. Anna gave one long look, and then ran forward.

"Why of all people! How did you come here?"

"Bless my heart, it's Anna Marshall."

There were excited greetings and introductions. The Hoyts were old friends, and they joined the party on the lawn. Mr. Hoyt, glow-

ing with enthusiasm, asked scores of questions of Mr. Kinsman. Mr. Jackson had driven toward the barn and did not return at once. When he did appear, he was quite a different looking fellow from the rustic whom they had seen but a few minutes before. His hair was combed, and his hands washed clean of strawberry stains. His cravat was neatly tied and his clothes brushed. As he approached Mrs. Hoyt said, "It is too bad that young man is deaf."

Mrs. Hoyt was startled by the effect of her remark. Mr. Hoyt, Mr. Patterson and the girls burst into laughter, while the others began asking questions. Confusion reigned for a moment. But Mr. Jackson was equal to the occasion, and said, smiling:

"I am deaf only when the emergency seems sufficiently urgent, Mrs. Hoyt."

"Who is Mr. Jackson, Anna?" whispered Miss Marion. "Is he the farmer's son?"

"No indeed," laughed Anna. "He is a Kenyon man, and the teacher of chemistry in the Portage High School."

"Oh!" said the surprised Marion.

Soon Mr. Patterson and Mr. Winter were in earnest conversation. Mr. Patterson was a banker of Cleveland, a man of good judgment, and quick decision. When he had joined the party again, Mr. Winter whispered something to

his wife, who then quietly drew Anna to one side.

"Miss Marshall, you have brought us good luck. Mr. Patterson is going to send his horses here for the winter. He made a very generous offer, and has paid half the money down. Mr. Winter did not want to take it, but Mr. Patterson insisted. It looks as if our mortgage might at last be paid off," and tears came to her eyes, as she gave Anna's hand an affectionate grasp.

The whole party had decided to spend the day, and the work of picking berries was resumed after lunch. The morning record was four hundred and fifty quarts. Mr. Hoyt offered a prize of five dollars if they could beat that record in the afternoon. The young ladies borrowed aprons and helped. Soon the large form of Mr. Hoyt was seen among the plants, endeavoring to help. Faster and faster came the boxes. Mr. Jackson made a second trip to the station, but not alone. Miss Marion Hoyt happened to be on the wagon when the horse was put between the shafts, and he had cautioned her:

"You must keep very quiet and not scare the horse, while we are hitching up. Please do not move until I say the word."

Mr. Jackson forgot to say the word, and the

obedient Marion found herself being driven along the now familiar road.

At five o'clock Joe blew his bugle, and the boys came in from the field. They were formed in line by the call of "Assembly." The visitors all gathered. Mr. Hoyt, his face beaming, stepped forward.

"Valiant Knights, defenders of our glorious flag, models of chivalry, could any one under these circumstances—"

Here he paused for a moment. Mr. Jackson like a flash, said:

"Tell me the way to Cleveland?"

Mr. Hoyt gave Mr. Jackson a look of understanding, and went on.

"Could any one fail to be aroused by this spectacle? In short, you have picked over one thousand quarts of berries; you have won the five dollars; you have made one family happy, and you have treated your own features to a strawberry decoration which would do credit to the famous mural decorators of ancient Pompeii. I salute you."

Mr. Kinsman then said, "You will be glad to know the results of your efforts. The berries will bring one hundred and forty dollars. The prize will increase this to one hundred and forty-five dollars. We have raised all but five

dollars, and that means success to our efforts."

Here Pat McGuire seemed to be struggling with some inner fever. He twisted and turned and finally saluted. He caught Mr. Kinsman's eye, and ventured to beckon to him. Mr. Kinsman went to Pat, who whispered:

"Why not put in the five dollars I received from the Swiss movement man?"

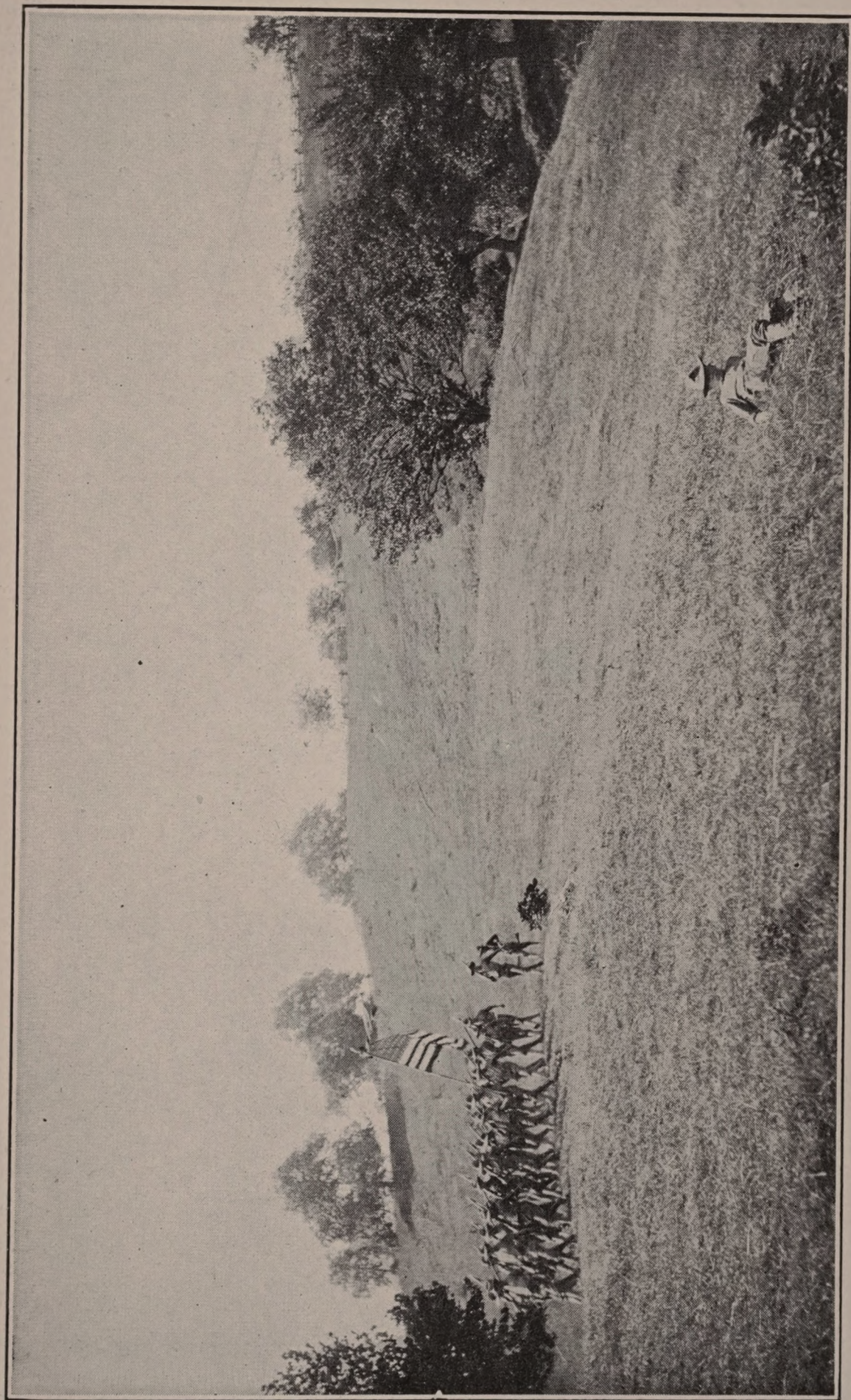
Mr. Kinsman stepped back and announced—

"I shall add to this fund the sum of five dollars which Private McGuire obtained as a reward of merit, for kindness to a total stranger. This makes the amount complete. Mr. Winter, we are happy to congratulate you on the immediate prospect of owning your home and farm free from incumbrance."

The embarrassed and grateful Mr. Winter could say nothing but "Thank you" in a choking voice, while Mrs. Winter was wiping her eyes with her apron.

The company marched back to camp and the visitors went off in the automobile promising to return in a few days to inspect Camp Crusader.

As Mr. Kinsman was leaving, Anna Marshall came to him and said, "John, do you remember the words in my little book 'Friendship'?"



“THOSE OLD TREES AND HILLSIDES WILL ALWAYS SEEM
UNLIKE OTHER TREES AND HILLSIDES”

“ ‘To seek the good of men, is to seek the glory of God.’

* * * * *

“ ‘The primal duties shine aloft like stars,
The charities that soothe and heal and bless
Are scattered at the feet of men like flowers.’ ”

“Yes, Anna, I remember; but I remember also that you suggested this day’s work out of the fulness of your good heart.”

CHAPTER XIV.

PLANNING THE ATTACK.



Upon the following day there was a long conference between the Wardens and the Captain with his three lieutenants. The boys were somewhat perplexed. Was some breach of discipline to be soundly punished or had the camp funds failed?

There had been a good deal of noise during the night. The boys had been restless from too great a devotion to ripe strawberries. Two boys had left their tents and had tied a cord across the guard line. This had caused the guard "to lose his dignity, as well as his uprightness," as Pat McGuire described it next day.

But the conference was for a far different purpose. Plans had been made for one-half the company to make an attack upon the camp, which would be defended by the other half.

"We are to attack the camp between ten o'clock and sunset tomorrow?" asked Captain Warren.

"Yes," answered Mr. Sumner, "you and Lieutenant Harding with the first platoon and six boys from Lieutenant Miles' platoon, but Miles will remain with the defenders."

"Art," said Tom to Miles, "here is where friendship ceases for a day."

"But will be renewed after you are captured as an invader, Tom," answered Miles with a smile.

"Captain Warren," resumed Mr. Sumner, "You will take your command from camp at five this evening. Have each boy take a blanket, and in his knapsack a day's rations. You will have supper before you go. Up to ten tomorrow the defenders will not leave camp, and will make no effort to learn where you have gone. After that hour you may attack."

"Mr. Sumner," asked Jimmie Harding, "do I understand that a successful attack means that we get our boys back into camp without discovery?"

"Yes, that is right. You are to attack by invading the camp before you are discovered. For the purpose of this campaign the camp bounds will be enlarged so that they will reach from the edge of the grove to the edge of the

ravine, east and west, and from the ridge on the south to a point half way up the hill on the north. The defenders must guard this space. Within these lines will be a neutral strip reaching to within fifty feet of the camp proper.

"The invading army will approach the camp from any direction they choose, singly or in groups. You may come from hill, ravine, woods or grove."

"How is the enemy to be repulsed?" asked Miles.

"Any member of the attacking party may be repulsed by merely being observed, if he is beyond the outer line, and if the defender is within the outer line. The invader must then retire and cannot make another attack upon that side of the camp. Should he reach the neutral strip unobserved by the defenders he may be captured only by being touched by a defender. If he reaches the inner line he has succeeded, and one defender must be withdrawn. The Wardens will act as umpires."

"How shall we know the exact lines?"

"We shall, this afternoon, make the lines with paper, torn into small bits. This can be clearly seen."

"What will prevent one defender from remaining in camp and observing every attack?"

was Tom's next question. "The attacking party would then be repulsed at once."

"The outer lines are too far away for complete observation from the camp, for one reason. But we should rule that a defender may repel by observing an enemy only when the defender is in the neutral strip. Again there are so many trees, bushes, strips of uneven ground and other obstacles that the attacking party has a very fair chance.

"The defenders will have to send out scouts. These may be captured by being touched by the enemy. A scout discerning an attacking party may not run to the neutral ground and then repel it, but must report to the officer in command at the camp, who will then send word to a picket to be on guard or will send extra pickets. Those on the camp lines will be known as guards, on the outer camp boundaries pickets, and defenders beyond the boundaries will be scouts."

"May a picket be captured by the enemy?"

"Yes, if two of the enemy reach the neutral ground without being observed they may capture a picket if both touch him, and succeed in getting beyond the lines without capture. The picket must then be withdrawn. But the captors must not attack again on that side of the camp."

"How near must an enemy be to be repulsed by being observed?"

"He must be near enough to hear a picket's shout. Merely to see the enemy in the far distance is not a repulse."

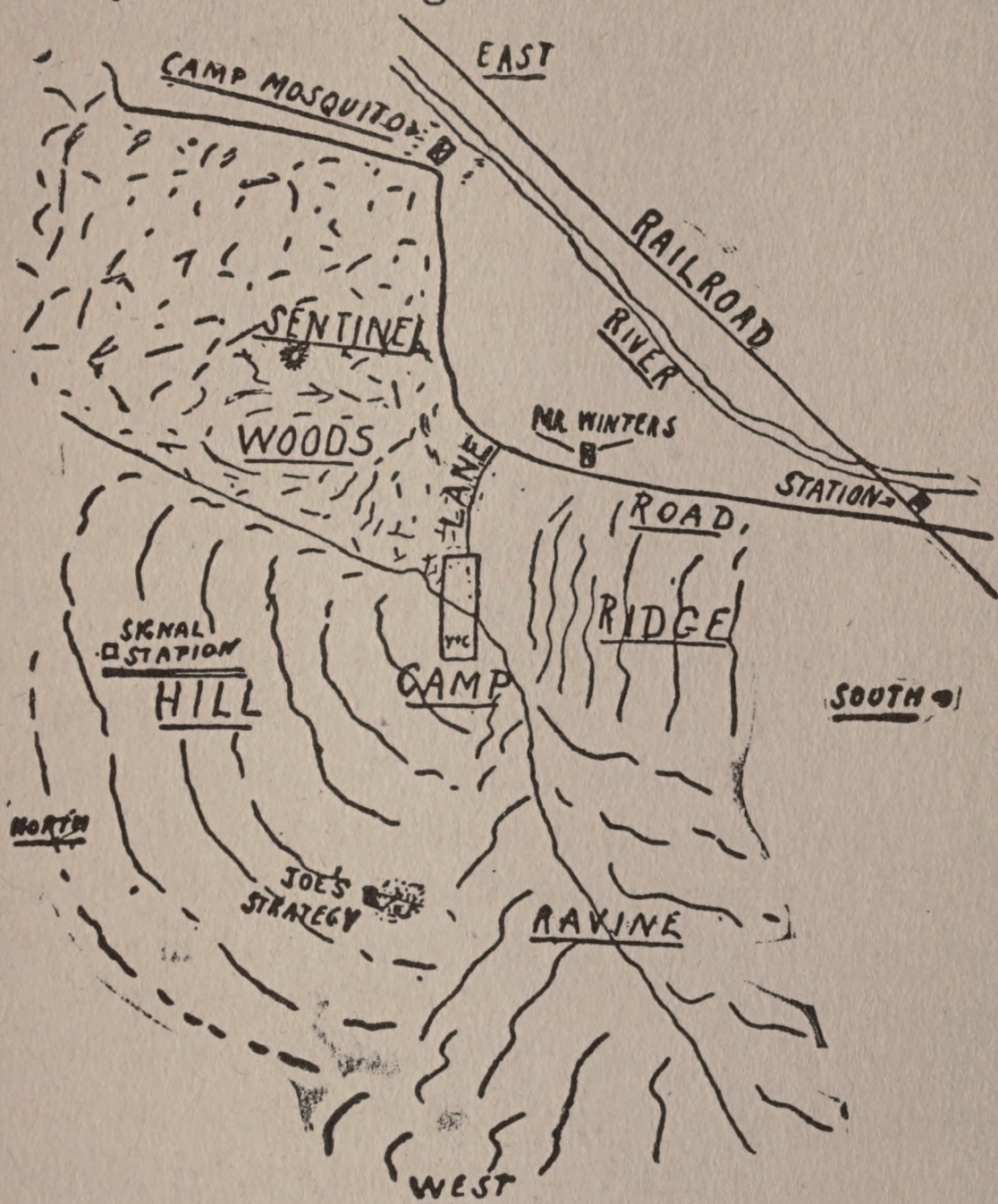
So the discussion went on until every detail was settled. Mr. Sumner had given much thought to the matter.

After lunch he explained the whole plan to the boys. During the whole afternoon they discussed the rules, and every difficulty was referred to Mr. Sumner. The boys tore up every available scrap of paper and made the lines. Supper was at five, and again after supper, the rules and difficulties were gone over in the light of the afternoon's questions.

It was nearly six o'clock when Captain Kinsman's squad marched out of camp amidst cheers. No guns were carried, for this was to be a battle of wits. Each boy had his blanket rolled up and wrapped in oil cloth, circling his shoulders. His knapsack was bursting with the rations Blewie had provided. Two carried a camp kettle on a stick. The kettle was filled with coffee, sugar and cans of soup.

They went down the lane and out into the road. The defenders at the camp knew nothing more of their movements for every boy

had promised to act honorably and to observe every rule of the game.



The attackers were permitted to have one spy, that is, one boy who might, if he could, take observations of the camp at any time, even before ten o'clock of the following day. His capture would forfeit two men of the attacking party.

Once upon the highway, Warren and Harding hastily decided that they would go to the river and camp for the night on a bit of high ground. It was about a mile distant, a romantic spot, known as an old Indian fortification. There were still marks of a series of pits which were said to have been rifle pits for sharp shooters.

There were but few necessary preparations for camping. The evening was clear and warm and there was no sign of rain. A camp fire was built and the kettle filled with water and swung over the fire on an improvised crane. The boys were then permitted to go swimming in the river while the officers held a conference. There were with the "attackers," Warren, Harding, Inwood, Russell and McGuire. Inwood had been selected as the "spy." He expected to return to the vicinity of the camp when necessary.

"We shall have a hard task to get our men back into that camp," said Harding.

"There is but one way to do it," remarked Joe, "and that is by strategy."

"Well, you're the great strategist, Joe. If you had your glider here we could all get on board and roll into camp before they could call out," said McGuire.

"It's a pity we're not all red headed like you,

Pat," said Joe, scornfully. "If we were we could climb the trees and fall into the camp and they would think we were shooting stars."

"I agree with Joe," said Tom thoughtfully, "we must use strategy. They will have pickets on every outer line and guards about the camp. Three pickets could easily protect each line. That means twelve boys. They will have twelve more to guard the camp."

"Would you suggest, Tom," asked Inwood, "that we make an attack all together or upon all four sides in small groups?"

"What do you think, Joe?" was Tom's non-committal response.

"I believe," said Joe, seriously, "that we ought to make a feint from one direction and attack from another. What is the nearest sheltered point to the neutral ground?"

"The wood at the lower end, at the creek, is the nearest point," replied the accurate Jimmie.

"That's the place then," said Tom, giving a curious glance at Joe, "and where shall we make the feint?"

"What's a feint?" asked Pat.

Everybody laughed. "A feint," said Jimmie, "is a pretense of doing one thing, when you are really doing another. We ought to make a feint at the opposite side of the camp."

"I have it," exclaimed Joe suddenly. "Tom,

give me two men and I shall give that camp such an imitation of a great army, over to the right of the ravine that they will be sure that that is our point of attack."

"How will you do it, Joe?"

"Leave that to me. Inwood, are you game for an adventure?"

"I think so," was Inwood's response. "I won't slide off any roof."

Joe ignored this in his reply.

"I noticed that when the names of the officers were called off to accompany the attackers that you were simply mentioned as Quartermaster. How many of the boys in the camp realize that you are not there? You spend so much time in the kitchen with the supplies that you are not connected with any platoon."

"Perhaps they don't miss me at all," was Inwood's comment.

"Now I'll tell you what to do. You slip back to camp just at dark, sneaking into the kitchen. Begin counting your stores and supplies as usual. As the boys drift into the kitchen they will see you at your familiar work and they will think nothing of it. You are our spy and the rules admit of this. In the morning you may send us a message by wig-wagging."

"How can I send a message with a whole camp watching me?" was Inwood's question.

"Very easily. At exactly ten take your place near the bonfire. Walk west about ten paces and back for signal 1. Walk east ten paces for signal 2. Walk toward the bonfire for signal 3. Have your account book with you; pretend to be studying it. Some of us will be watching you from somewhere. You need only send a word or two. What we want to know is from what direction they expect the attack, and how many guards and pickets will be on the side toward the woods. Send it like this: 'East six,' or 'West eight.'"

"What then?"

"Keep your eye on the hill toward the west. Do you remember that you can see the sky line above a bare space between a clump of trees and some bushes? We shall light a small fire near that point. Direct attention to the smoke. They will think we are sillies enough to forget about the smoke. That done, your duty is ended. The spy in camp must do nothing else."

"What if I am placed on duty on a picket line?"

"Beg off until after dinner, saying we must have meals even though we have an enemy on our heels."

Inwood quickly went over his duties, and left the spot where the "invaders" were bivouaced.

Joe rapidly unfolded his plan to the other

officers. It was a very ingenious one, and they received it with great enthusiasm. They did not divulge the plans to the boys that night as they feared too much discussion would interfere with sleep.

The swimmers were now back, and Ross was preparing the soup in the big kettle. When all was ready each boy filled his cup and opening his knapsack sat on the ground prepared to enjoy a second supper.

"It's a good place to bivouac," remarked Joe.

"What in the world is that?" asked Pat. "Who wants to bivwack or meditate, or play 'thumbs up,' when we are on the eve of an engagement in which we may be torn limb from limb by our own scared soldiers who are trying to hold us back. What I want to do is to sleep and not to go bivwacking around. What is this here bivwack anyway, Joe?"

"You're a green Irishman, Pat. I almost stepped on you awhile ago, not being able to distinguish you from the green grass. To bivouac is to encamp in the open air preparatory to an engagement. That's exactly what you want to do."

"Well, I never," said the perplexed Pat; "why can't people call things by simple names? I heard that Red Cross gang talking about 'anti-septics' the other day, and I asked to see one, as

I had seen nearly every other kind of bug and germ a'crawling over my pillow, since I've been in this camp. They brought one out, that they had put in a bottle with some liquid. You couldn't see the antiseptic at all, for he had been dissolved in the liquid. They said he was a 'Dioxygen' and there sure enough the name was on the bottle. I expect I'll be covered with mosquitoes, crickets, June bugs and dioxygens when I wake up after slaping on the ground. It's a cruel world. Say, why not call this 'Camp Mosquito'?"

Pat's good humor kept the boys in excellent spirits until they felt the need of sleep. They opened their pieces of oil cloth and spread them on the ground and placed their knapsacks for pillows. Wrapping themselves in their blankets they were soon asleep. All but Tom and Joe. They sat whispering together.

"Make for the 'Sentinel', Tom," said Joe. "Climb up to the top and you can see me. It will be easy as pie."

"I wish you could find the key to that cipher as easily as you can find ways to get into camp."

"You wait Tom; this camp isn't over yet, and we shall know the secret of the 'Sentinel' before we leave. I have been thinking a good deal about it lately."

"Well, turn in, Joe. You have work to do in the morning."

The camp was very quiet. The silent stars looked down on a remote hillock where two dozen boys, away from parents and teachers, were peacefully sleeping. They were the boys of rich and poor, learned and unlearned, upon the equal footing of boyhood. Not one of them had slept out of doors before, but the spell of discipline was on them and in their confidence and youthful faith they feared no evil.

When very much later the moon arose and shed a glorious light upon the spot it looked upon a calmly sleeping group; all but one, for in the pale moonlight one boy was pacing up and down with a look of intensity and exultation on his face. It was Joe Russell.

On that night, at that hour there had come to Joe, in a second of time, a thought, that had awakened his mind to a clue, a very slight clue indeed, but yet a clue, to the solving of the Mystery.

CHAPTER XV.

THE ATTACK ON THE CAMP.



Early morning found both camps awake and alert. At Camp Crusader the boys were soon at breakfast. Among them was Inwood. He had done as directed. With infinite pains he had succeeded in getting to the kitchen about half past seven. There was not a suspicion among the boys that he was one of the enemy. His heart beat very fast when the first group came to the kitchen for a drink. Leo was counting over boxes and cans. It was his regular duty. Fred Ewing called out to him:

"You are too busy for one man, Leo, you ought to get yourself incorporated into a company."

Inwood replied boldly, "Why don't you lend a hand, Fred, if you see so much work?"

He joined the group and strolled into camp. But his second ordeal was to come. Who

should meet them as they were crossing the creek, but Mr. Sumner. As he saw Inwood a queer light came into Mr. Sumner's eyes, and he gave a little start, and almost began to speak. In a moment he called out, "Hello, boys!" and passed on. Leo knew that he was discovered by Mr. Sumner, but Mr. Sumner was a neutral, and would not give him away. He was not easy, however, until he was in his cot.

* * * * *

At Camp Mosquito, for so it was called upon Pat's suggestion, breakfast was served early. Coffee was made in the kettle and the knapsacks further emptied. Joe took Ingham and Norris and prepared to go before the rest started. They had a long tramp before them. But Joe had time to say to Tom:

"Tom, I have great news for you. I am almost certain that I have a clue to that cipher."

"What is it, Joe; where did you get it?"

"I cannot tell you now. It came to me last night as I was thinking over our work for today. But we'll get together tonight, and if we do not learn something then I'll resign."

Tom had to be content with that.

Joe left with his two boys about half past seven. It was nearly nine when Tom started his company. They carefully made their way down the hill on which they camped and across

the pasture and to the edge of the great woods.

There was intense excitement as they entered the woods. After they were quite a way from the pasture, where they possibly might have been seen, Tom stopped his company and said:

"This wood reaches right to the camp, about a mile away. We must go quietly because they may have a scout in here. Do you all understand every rule?"

Everyone nodded. Tom continued, "Observe every rule strictly, obey orders exactly."

"Captain," said Pat McGuire, impressively. "We trust you and we will follow. We would rather be the captors of that camp than to have fallen on the field of Gettysburg."

In single file they went on, Tom leading. He was not sure he could find the "Sentinel" from this direction but he dared not hesitate. As carefully if not as noiselessly as Indians, the line made its way over the floor of the forest. Tom's judgment and luck combined, triumphed. He soon spied the huge tree with the little clearing about it. His thoughts reverted for a moment to Uncle Ezra's parchment, but were soon again at their task of invading the camp.

As they quietly drew beneath the shade of the "Sentinel," Tom made each boy take off his blanket, knapsack and hat. He then told each one to break off a branch with a thick bunch

of leaves on it and fasten it on his shirt so that his face was completely shielded.

It was a strange looking group that awaited further orders.

The form of a boy surmounted by a bunch of leaves which hid the face was a startling figure to behold.

It was now 9:30 and the squad sat down, awaiting orders. Jimmie Harding went a hundred yards toward camp to look out for scouts. Tom went off and found the little tree he and Joe had used a few days before and made ready to climb the "Sentinel." Pulling out his watch he saw it was 9:40. Giving directions for every one to remain perfectly still, he climbed the little tree and was soon lost to sight in the branches of the "Sentinel."

* * * * *

In the meantime Inwood in the camp had evaded guard duty and was in the kitchen. He observed that Miles was doing his duty faithfully. Three pickets were on each of the four sides at the outer boundaries. Two guards were on each side of the camp. Miles and Potter were in earnest consultation for a long time.

Very soon, Miles took one guard and placed him on the picket line toward the south. He evidently thought that an attack would come from that direction. On the east toward the

woods, the three pickets kept a keen lookout. Inwood noted that they were reliable boys, Ewing being one of them.

At ten o'clock Inwood walked casually, book in hand, toward the camp fire. He stopped a moment, glancing at the tree top. No one was to be seen.

Just as he was about to walk according to agreement Mr. Sumner came up to him.

"Well, Leo," he asked, but so no one could hear, "are you not on guard?"

Leo looked at him hard for a moment, and though his heart was beating fast he said calmly:

"No, sir. I am casting up the accounts."

Mr. Sumner came a little closer, winked one eye and said, "Don't worry about me, Leo. You are all right."

Encouraged at this, Inwood paced off his message, "South—three."

A few moments later he looked west and sure enough on the hill top was a little column of smoke.

Walking to a position where he would be observed by Miles, he looked earnestly at the smoke.

"What do you see, Leo?" asked Miles. "Smoke, by Jove. Potter, come here. See that smoke. There they are sure enough. Why in the world did they not think about the danger of

lighting a fire? We have them. You watch that for a few minutes."

* * * * *

We must now follow Joe with Ingham and Norris. They made a long detour and finally gained the hilltop west of the camp. They hid behind the bushes to the side of the open space and earnestly watched the camp. They saw some of the pickets and guards. Very soon they spied Inwood with his book, at the fire.

They now knew he was safely in camp and they rejoiced. Joe's heart failed for a moment when Mr. Sumner came up but a moment later he took courage, as Leo paced off the wig-wag signal, "South—three."

Joe crawled back from the bushes about one hundred feet on the plateau at the top of the hill. He took a stick he had laid there, and tying his handkerchief on it he stood upright, facing the woods and "Sentinel." He was too far beyond the crest of the hill to be seen from the camp.

Quickly he raised the flag and in a moment he was sending toward that tree the signal "South—three. Attack in fifteen minutes."

He then lighted a little fire and waited until he was sure the smoke was seen.

Joe then said to his two subalterns, "I am going to crawl along the crest of that hill, from

the bushes to the trees, just as if I were making my way down the hill to the ravine. I can be seen from the camp. When I reach the trees, I shall turn away from the crest and creeping along twenty feet in the rear, shall return in a circle to the bushes, where I started. My return cannot be seen. Norris, when I reach the tree you start, and, Ingham, you start when Norris reaches the tree. Follow me and do this seven times."

They then began to make their trips.

* * * * *

In the camp Art Miles was elated. The smoke was a sure indication of the enemy. Potter soon called to him:

"Art, quick, there is one of them." Sure enough they saw a form just against the sky line crawling toward the trees and the ravine. They could not at that distance recognize the resourceful Joe.

"There's another, Happy! Count them; that's two, there goes the third. Four," he added excitedly as Joe made his second trip, "five, six, seven," he counted almost breathlessly, "twenty-one! They are all there."

He stopped a moment to think. "Quick, Potter, withdraw two pickets from the side near the woods, and one from the hill and put them toward the ravine. They are coming there."

Art then hastened to each picket and guard saying:

"They are all on the hill yonder; guard every inch of the line toward the ravine."

The Wardens were by this time in position to take observation of the struggle and to act as umpires. But even they had been misled by Miles' judgment and they were at the upper end of the camp.

Leo quietly went to Mr. Sumner and said so no one could hear:

"Will you take a suggestion, sir? The umpires seem to be bunched."

"But they are where they can best see the attack."

"Art Miles is not infallible, sir," was Inwood's only reply, as he walked away.

"Thank you, Leo," said Mr. Sumner, kindly. "I see what you mean and it's fair." A moment later Mr. Sumner strolled somewhat nearer the other end of the camp.

* * * * *

Tom Warren in the tree top found difficulty at first in getting sight of the hill on which he knew Joe to be, but at last he reached the higher branches and could see plainly. He soon discerned the waving flag, "South—three, attack in fifteen minutes." Tom hastily climbed down and told his company of the message. The

boys were at fever heat of subdued excitement.

There was no time to be lost. Tom ordered Campbell and Ross to make through the woods toward the grove, on the left flank, and capture a picket if possible, but by all means attract all three to that point.

Harding rushed up saying, "We shall lose time finding our way, Tom."

But Tom smiled as he pointed to a tree trunk, circled with branches, tied on a few days before by himself.

"We have a blazed trail, Jimmie."

Jimmie gave one look and without asking for an explanation said, "We are ready."

Quickly but noiselessly Tom led his company up the trail. As they drew nearer to the camp they went slowly. Tom crept on ahead to see if he could discover a picket. Sure enough right at the edge of the woods was a moving figure. Tom commanded his men to fall down on their hands and knees. There was a growth of small bushes here, not over a foot high. The bunches of leaves worn by the boys blended in with the bushes so completely that the advancing boys could not be distinguished.

The picket was evidently interested in something at the other end of the beat. He hastened to that end. Tom ventured far forward, his face protected by his bunch of leaves.

Suddenly his heart gave a great bound, for he saw Campbell quickly rise from the very heart of a bush and clap his hand over the mouth of the picket and drop him down. Ross was at hand to help. According to the rules the picket was captured.

But what about the others? The message said, "Three." He must not run too great a risk for one picket could send back his whole company.

As he saw no one he signalled his men to advance. Slowly they crept forward like small bushes, halting and waiting. They were now very near the edge of the woods. The line of paper was but fifty feet away. Discovery meant defeat until the line was crossed.

But Tom relied on the concealment of his men by their green masks. Foot by foot they drew nearer. The line was now only about twenty feet away; almost near enough to make a dash. Where *was* that picket?

Of course the camp could now be clearly seen. Tom realized that Joe's scheme had worked, for the officers were at the further end.

Suddenly some excitement arose. Joe had not failed him. There was a clamor of excited challenges, for Joe and his two men had noisily attempted to reach camp from the ravine. This was by design.

When the challenge arose every guard and

picket and officer turned toward the ravine.

Tom's chance had come. He crouched low and hurled back the command, "Follow me." He ran at full speed toward the camp. His men followed. In a moment they were on the neutral ground free from repulse by observation. It was yet some distance to the camp, however. Every step gained before discovery meant more certain victory.

The excitement was too much for Pat McGuire.

Raising himself up and tearing away his mask, he raced toward the camp shouting, "Surrender, surrender!"

It took but a moment for the defenders to grasp the whole situation. With great shouts they ran toward the advancing invaders. But it was too late. Pickets and guards were too far away. One or two men were tagged and made prisoners, but the joy of conquest was too great. They refused to act as prisoners. The entire body of invaders dashed into the camp street with hurrahs that resounded from wood to ravine. The defenders hurried in, crestfallen; but excited. A little later, Little Joe and his squad of two appeared from the ravine and scampered to the spot.

Confusion reigned. Finally Mr. Sumner

quickly got hold of Joe and told him to blow "Assembly."

The instinct of obedience was uppermost. The boys fell in. Mr. Kinsman then consulted with Mr. Sumner and Mr. Jackson, and addressed the company:

"The invaders have captured the camp. They have done it fairly; everyone has obeyed the rules. The defenders were alert and watchful but were defeated by superior strategy. I compliment you, Captain Warren, on your victory. I do not see yet how it was done, but we shall all wish to know. And as for you, Lieutenant Miles, you are a good soldier and you did everything in your power to save the camp. You, too, even in defeat, are to be congratulated. The camp now owes you all a dinner."

Amidst great chatter and explanation and discussion they ate the hearty dinner Blewie had prepared. Little Joe had to tell of his strategy again and again. That afternoon most of the camp visited the hill top to see where Joe had made three men look like twenty-one and to take a look at the "Sentinel."

When the excitement had subsided it was Pat who broke forth with the reason of the victory.

"We won because we had the trained minds of the football team on our side and because all the Irish were with the invaders."

CHAPTER XVI.

A CLUE TO THE MYSTERY AND A RESCUE.



The talk about the attack on the camp lasted far into the evening. Leo Inwood had to tell several times how he got into the camp undetected, and how he signalled to Joe. Campbell and Ross told how they had captured the poor picket. Campbell crept into the bush but Ross went fifty

feet away. When the picket was exactly opposite the bush, Ross, hidden in another, gave a low whistle. The picket had stopped upon hearing it, and Campbell, waiting until his back was turned, pounced upon him. Mr. Sumner admitted that he knew at once that Inwood was the spy, and wondered that no one had noticed that Inwood had marched away with the invaders. Thus every detail was gone over, and every incident related.

As soon as possible, Joe sought out Tom Warren and they went to the empty officers' tent.

"Tom," began Joe, "I am sure that I have a clue that will help us read the riddle."

"So you said this morning, Joe, now out with it."

"Well, I have been thinking over the a's and b's on the parchment. It suddenly came to me while studying the signal code, that if I substituted numbers for the letters we might read that puzzle."

"Joe, you are a wizard. That is a great idea; where is the parchment?"

"Here is a copy of it. I have not had time to try it out. We can do it now."

The two boys were seated close together under the light of a tin lantern which held a candle. They held the paper close to the light and their heads almost touched as they leaned forward to examine it.

"Take that first line, Joe. It goes this way: a b a g b a h b b t a l b f b b n b a x a a b p.

"If we substitute 1 for a and 2 for b, we get 121 as the first letter, that is C."

"What about the g?"

"Let's try the a's and b's first."

Tom drew out a pencil and made the following arrangement of the letters:

aba	ba	bb	a	b	bb	ba	aab
121	21	22	1	2	22	21	112
C	O	A	I	T	A	O	U.

"Coaitaou. That doesn't make sense, Joe."

Joe was silent. He thought a few minutes, and then said:

"We are stupids. Try with a as 2 and b as 1."

Again Tom wrote:

aba	ba	bb	a	b	bb	ba	aab
212	12	11	2	1	11	12	221
S	E	N	T	I	N	E	L.

"Hurrah, that's it, Tom, 'Sentinel'." And Joe gave Tom an excited slap on the back. "We have it; good for you, old Tom."

Tom's eyes glistened and he gave a little hysterical laugh.

"You're right, old scout, we have it. Hurry, let's read it all."

Tom was unusually aroused. He had never had much faith in their learning the clue. Quickly he made ready to write down the other letters.

"Every letter in there but a and b is simply a mark of separation. Give me only the a's and b's."

It was but a few minutes until he had them copied. Quickly they translated them.

ba	aa	aba	a	bbab	aa	abb	aaa	a	ba	bb
12	22	212	2	1121	22	211	222	2	12	11
e	a	s	t	w	a	r	d	t	e	n

aaab ba ba a a baa abb ba ba aaab ba ba
 222I I2 I2 2 2 I22 2II I2 I2 222I I2 I2
 f e e t t h r e e f e e
 a aaa ba ba baba.
 2 222 I2 I2 I2I2.
 t d e e p.

E-a-s-t-w-a-r-d t-e-n f-e-e-t.

T-h-r-e-e f-e-e-t d-e-e-p.

"Eastward ten feet, three feet deep. That means from the 'Sentinel.' Tom, that's where our treasure is. Let's go and take a look at the spot. Have you a compass?"

"Ewing has one. I'll get it."

"Get an oil lantern, too, Tom."

Tom hurried out of the tent. Joe still pored over the paper, his eyes glowing.

In a few minutes Tom returned.

"It is nearly nine o'clock. I have permission from Mr. Sumner to leave camp for a short time. Here is the lantern, but we must not light it now. Fred let me take his compass, too, but he was very curious and asked twice what I wanted it for."

Tom and Joe started for the creek. Although it was not very dark, they went slowly, for they were in danger of stumbling over a stone or log. A short distance from the camp they lighted the lantern and then hunted for

the tree that marked the entrance to their trail in the woods.

As Tom and Joe left camp a dark figure slipped behind a tree near the creek. It was Fred Ewing. As they proceeded he followed. Going from tree to bush to keep out of sight and moving only when they moved, so as to attract no attention by any noise he might make, Fred kept them in view. This was much easier when the lantern was lighted.

Into the deep woods they went, looking for the marked trees. It was as dark as pitch for the star light made no impression on the floor of the forest. Slowly they moved forward. The light from the lantern cast weird reflections and dancing shadows on all sides of them.

Fred now drew close for he could see his way only with difficulty and he needed the feeble light which the lantern shed over the trail. Joe and Tom did not look behind them but pressed on. Fred, forty feet in the rear and stepping softly, went from tree to tree so that he might seek shelter if he needed it.

Soon they reached the small clearing. There stood the mighty trunk of the "Sentinel." Tom and Joe hastened to it and Tom took out his compass.

Fred slipped behind the nearest tree and waited.

Under the spell of their secret mission Tom and Joe still talked in low voices.

"Here is the East," and Tom moved slowly about the tree, compass in hand, while Joe held the lantern. "Now, this is the center of the tree toward the East. Joe, pace off ten feet."

Joe did so in silence. Tom went to examine the earth at the point where Joe stood. They knelt down and put the lantern on the ground.

At this movement the curious Fred leaned far from his shelter. The rays from the lantern striking his face made it exceedingly white against the background. Tom, glancing up, caught a glimpse of the white face. For a moment he was frightened into speechlessness. A cold chill ran up his back and his teeth set. In another moment he saw the uniform beneath the white face and he knew they had been followed.

Quickly Tom stooped again to regain his composure and to give himself time to think. Joe noticed Tom's disturbed demeanor. Tom said in a low whisper:

"Joe, we have been followed. There's a boy behind that tree."

Joe turned. "Are you sure, Tom?"

"Yes, sure."

Joe then said very loud:

"This is no place to put a trap for wood chucks, Tom."

Tom saw Joe's meaning, so he replied, "You're right, Joe, let's go further on."

As they arose, Joe stepped toward the tree and shouted:

"Who is there? Get out of there!"

The startled Fred, taken by surprise, turned and ran as best he could. Tom and Joe saw his retreating form disappear in the deep shadows.

"Quick, Tom, we must get back or we shall have the whole camp out here if that fellow suspects anything. Who do you suppose it is?"

"We shall soon find out."

Quickly they made their way to the creek, by the means of the now familiar marked trees. When they reached camp Tom quietly said:

"Joe, you wait here to see if any one comes out of the woods and I'll find out who is missing."

Tom quickly made the rounds of the tents. One cot in Tent 7 was empty. Hastily going to Headquarters, Tom looked on the bulletin to see who occupied Tent 7. Fred Ewing was one, but Ewing was not in the tent. Tom then went to see who was on guard. It was Norris. Ewing was not accounted for. He had suspected that it was Ewing ever since he started back from the tree. Ewing had been very curious about the use of the compass.

Tom joined Joe and together they waited,

but no boy appeared. Ten o'clock came, the guards were changed; still Tom and Joe waited. But all was quiet toward the woods. Tom again went to Ewing's tent. His cot was empty. Upon returning he showed some anxiety.

"Joe, perhaps Fred cannot find his way out. He may be lost in the woods."

"That's so," said the startled Joe. "We scared him and he ran off so quickly he could not follow us out."

"That's pretty serious, Joe. He may get badly hurt by falling over tree trunks and he might get awfully frightened. There are one or two big bluffs near the river, too. There is no telling in which direction he has gone."

"I'm going to tell Mr. Sumner."

Mr. Sumner was aroused. When the story was told to him, he acted with a rapidity which startled the boys.

As he was hastily pulling on his clothes, he said:

"Warren, you go and wake every boy in camp. Tell them to dress. Russell, you build up the bonfire as high as you can. We'll be ready in a moment."

By this time Mr. Kinsman and Mr. Jackson were awake, too, and dressing. Mr. Sumner sought out Joe at the fire.

"Joe, blow assembly."

Quickly the sleepy boys assembled. The news that Fred was lost in the woods soon aroused them.

Mr. Kinsman took command.

"Red Cross Squad, get your stretcher and medicine chest! Each boy who has a lantern drop out of line and get it. First set of fours, get your guns. Quartermaster, furnish twenty-five cartridges to each of the first set of fours. The guards will remain at camp and will keep the bonfire going. Light another below the camp on the edge of the woods.

"Young Crusaders, this is serious. We must find that boy. We shall make a long line. Each boy keep in touch with the ones on right and left. Try to keep not over forty feet apart. Listen for orders that may be passed along the line."

Quickly he marched the boys along the edge of the woods. The side of the woods near the camp was only about a quarter of a mile long, but the woods widened gradually to over a mile. They were more than a mile deep.

As the column, in single file, marched parallel to the edge of the woods, Mr. Jackson caused one boy to drop from the column every forty feet. The long line reached from creek to the grove. Nearly every one had a lantern.

Finally the word came along the line to

advance. Quickly the long row entered the shadows. According to instructions, they called "Fred," not loudly. After each call they listened for a reply. But a solemn silence brooded over the forest.

Slowly the line moved on. The darkness, relieved only by the glimmer of occasional lanterns, the dark moving forms, and the echoes that resounded long after a call, affected the boys strangely.

In about five minutes the word came to halt. Then came the command, "Right Dress."

The line had been getting ragged, as some moved faster than others.

At this point, Mr. Sumner caused the guns to be fired. After the firing had sent a great roaring crash, echoing and re-echoing through the forest, there was intense silence, so intense indeed that the boys keyed to a high pitch of excitement began to show symptoms of panic. Again the word came:

"Steady boys, steady!"

Along the line it passed from boy to boy. It had the desired effect. Again the long line moved forward. Each small log was examined to see if it were the missing boy. Again the command came to halt, and the guns were fired. The column was now about a quarter of

a mile through the woods. Soon the "Sentinel" was passed by the center of the line.

As the woods grew wider the column did not sweep the entire distance. Jimmie Harding was on the extreme left. He kept turning away from the direction in which they were moving—calling, "FRED."

Just after the second halt, Jimmie thought he heard a faint cry. He stopped and shouted as loud as possible, "FRED."

But the calls of the others prevented him from hearing. He then, upon his own responsibility, commanded "*Halt!*" Quickly the word was carried on.

"Silence along the line." For a moment there was anything but silence; then all was quiet.

Jimmie then said, "Send Mr. Kinsman to Harding on left."

These words were carried from boy to boy. Soon Mr. Kinsman, who had been near the center, reached Jimmie.

"Mr. Kinsman, I believe I heard a faint answer way off there to the left. Our line does not reach as far as that. May we halt while I go there to see?"

"I'll go with you, Jimmie."

They made their way a hundred feet. Jimmie again called, "FRED."

At first he could hear nothing but the echoes

in the trees. Then suddenly so far off it was almost like the sighing of the wind, came the sound, "Halloo."

"He's there," was Jimmie's exclamation.

"Wait here, we must change the direction of this line."

Mr. Kinsman returned to the first boy.

"Send the command, 'left face, forward march'."

This command went ringing through the forest. The whole line was now slowly drawing toward the spot where the faint halloo was sounded. But Mr. Kinsman halted the first boy. The second was soon on the spot. One by one they came in. There in the heart of the woods, the whole company gathered.

"I feared to go to the left without re-forming the line. Some one else might get lost."

Quickly they spread out again, much nearer together and at right angles to their previous direction.

After marching about one hundred yards, they again halted, and Mr. Kinsman called, "*Fred.*"

After a moment they could distinguish the answer, "Here,—here."

It was a little louder. They went forward at a quicker pace. Another halt, and the response was very plain, "Here, quick."

As fast as they could, they moved on. Sud-

denly Mr. Sumner called, "Halt." The line halted.

"Gather to the center." Quickly they came together as the line had not been so far extended as before. The group was now in a ragged formation, the lanterns lighting up white faces. Mr. Sumner commanded:

"Move forward very slowly. Watch the ground."

By this time Fred's cries were very clear.

"Here, here."

Mr. Sumner called out:

"Fred, we will find you in a moment."

The answer came at once, "All right."

Mr. Sumner was mystified. Why did not Fred come toward them; was he hurt? He called once more:

"Fred, are you hurt?"

"No, I am all right."

A sigh of relief went up. But where was he, why did he not move?

The rays of the lanterns now showed that the trees were farther apart. A moment later they came into a small clearing, very dimly lighted by the stars overhead.

There stood Fred.

The foremost boys seized him with a rush. Loud were the shouts and cheers that echoed

through the woods. Tom noticed that the Wardens quietly shook hands with each other.

As soon as quiet was somewhat restored, Fred tried to answer the hundred questions that had been hurled at him. A strange group it was, gathered close, with lanterns casting flickering shadows on the forest wall by which they were surrounded.

Fred told how he had followed Tom and Joe. When they startled him, he ran, thinking to return to camp. But he turned in the wrong direction. In a few minutes he knew he was lost. He called but no answer came. It was very dark. He thought he might find the creek. He feared the fallen logs. At last he came to the little clearing. Here he resolved to wait. After being there what seemed a very long time, he heard the guns. He then knew that efforts were being made to find him. But he could not distinguish the direction from which the firing came. Fearing to venture into the woods again, he waited, shouting as loud as he could. At last he knew that help was near, so he kept his position. Finally the boys came. He was very grateful. It was an experience from which he would learn a lesson.

For a while the whole group thought itself lost. But by spreading out again, they soon found the "Sentinel." Gathering here they

made their way to camp, where great blazing fires were burning high. The Wardens served bread and milk in the kitchen and the boys held a short jubilee around the fire. Then they went to bed.

Many a boy, who had been neglectful before, said his prayers that night.

CHAPTER XVII.

A FORCED MARCH.



Reveille sounded as usual on Thursday morning. The appearance of the boys indicated a sleepless night. The excitement had been too much for them.

Fred Ewing was very quiet. He was wondering what punishment he would receive for having caused so much trouble.

Would he be sent home?

When the list of boys who had forfeited credits was read, Fred's name was not called. But as Mr. Sumner finished he made a long pause.

"There is one case of disobedience," he finally said, "that has not been mentioned in this list. Sergeant Ewing left camp last night without permission. That was in itself a breach of discipline, which ordinarily would mean losing five points. His only motive was curiosity. He had no intention of doing mischief, certainly no

intention of arousing the camp. We are glad he met with no mishap during his adventure. His record is clear to date, and this is a point in his favor. It has seemed advisable to the Wardens, however, to take some precautionary measures. Ewing cannot leave camp bounds again, for any reason, unless ordered to do so, until further notice."

Fred's face lighted up. He was not to be sent home. The camp bounds were large. He had been fairly dealt with and not rated as wilfully disobedient in order to make trouble.

When the company was dismissed, Fred stepped up to Mr. Sumner, saying simply and sincerely:

"Thank you, sir."

Mr. Sumner was evidently pleased, for he put his hands on Fred's shoulder, saying:

"We have no personal feeling about it, Fred. It's for the good of the camp."

"I know it. You will find me about camp, from now on."

"We feel sure of that, Fred. No one is going to take the trouble to watch you."

"I'll be here," asserted Fred.

Joe and Tom sought out the Wardens soon after breakfast.

"You gave us permission to leave the camp last night," said Captain Warren. "We tried

to allow no one to see us, but I borrowed a compass from Ewing and it aroused his suspicions. We are sorry for the trouble we made."

"It was not your fault. Did you accomplish your errand?"

"No, we were interrupted."

"You boys have something on your mind," broke in Mr. Kinsman, laughing. "You act like a couple of conspirators. Can you not take us into your confidence? Are you planning to blow up the camp?"

Tom laughed, too.

"It would sound foolish to you, Mr. Kinsman, but Joe and I have been at work all winter on something which has deeply interested us. We have no desire to conceal anything from you, but we have nothing to tell except a few wild guesses. If you would permit us one full day to ourselves, we can determine whether we are on a wild goose chase or not."

"Please let us consider it for a few minutes. We will send for you."

When the boys had gone, the Wardens looked at each other. Then Mr. Jackson said:

"They are two of the most reliable boys in the camp. They are good officers. Joe Russell has done one or two good things and Tom is level headed. I am in favor of giving them a day."

"So am I," added Mr. Sumner. "Joe thought

out that attack on the camp, and it was a work of art."

"I believe we shall do it, then," was Mr. Kinsman's decision.

The boys were summoned.

"We are going to give you a day's leave of absence," said Mr. Kinsman. "When do you want to go?"

Joe answered promptly:

"We should like to take some rations and our blankets and go tonight after ten. No one will follow us again."

"Very well; report to me just before you leave."

Tom and Joe thanked the Wardens and hastened away to prepare for their expedition.

Just then a wagon drove into camp. It was a traveling butcher's cart which supplied the camp from the distant village. The driver alighted and as Inwood was looking over his supply, he remarked:

"I passed a big automobile four miles back, filled with people coming to the camp. They were clean bruk down; something wrong with their engine. They told me to tell Mr. Winter to drive out for them."

Tom overheard the driver's statement. He at once asked:

"Have you been to Mr. Winter's?"

"No, and I don't want to, if I can help it, as I am going the other road."

"We shall get word to him," was Tom's reply.

Just then Mr. Jackson came down the camp street. Tom explained the situation to him.

Mr. Jackson was interested at once. He was sure it was Mr. Hoyt and his party.

"How many are in the party?" he asked of the driver of the meat wagon.

"A big, fat man, his wife and a whole passel of girls. They are on the upper road, and there is no farm house near them. They looked pretty hungry."

Mr. Jackson acted at once. He asked Tom to accompany him, and they took two of the bicycles that were in camp and rode to Mr. Winter's.

Mrs. Winter informed them that Mr. Winter had taken his horses to the blacksmith shop, several miles away. He had ridden one and led the other.

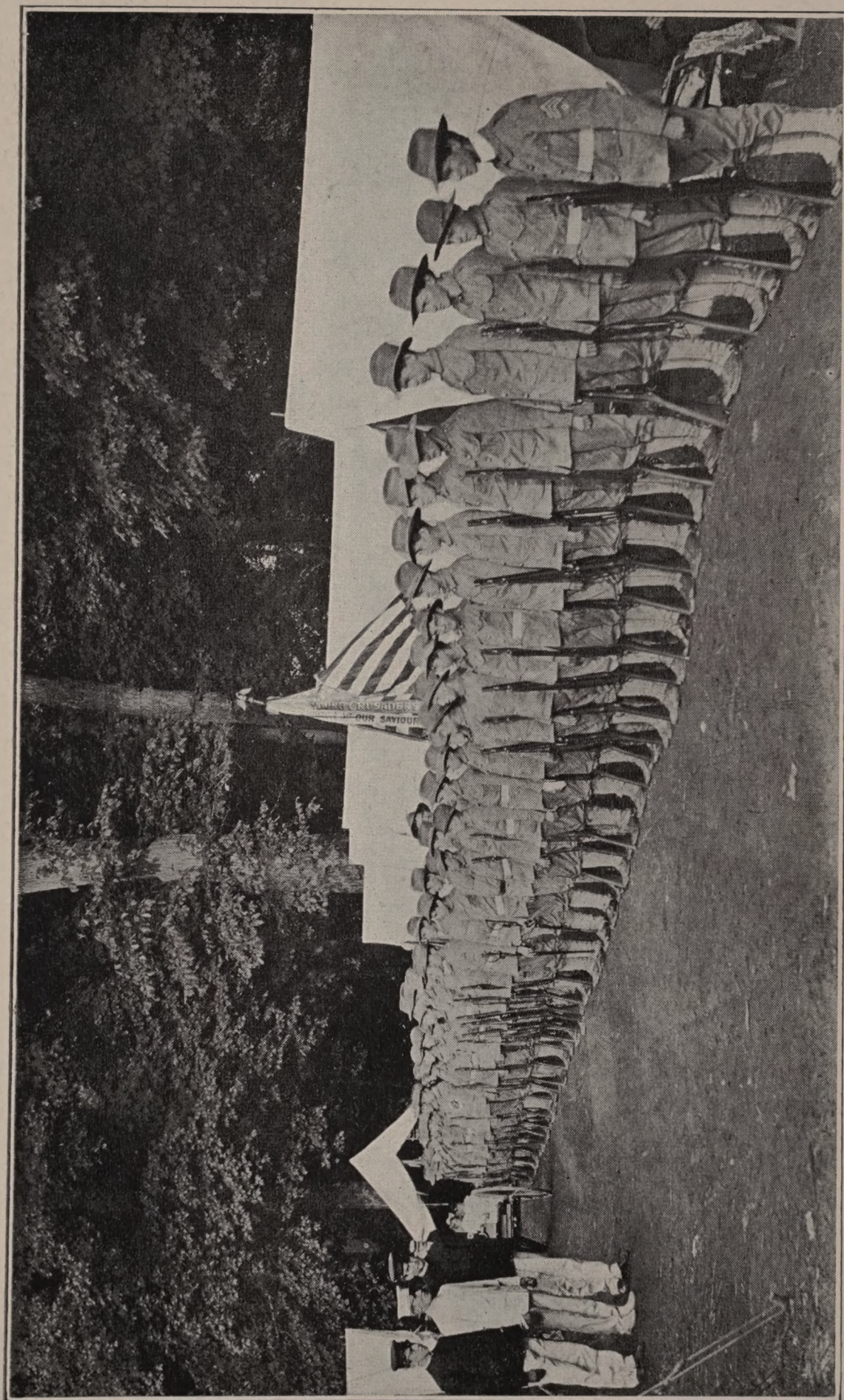
Mr. Jackson thought quickly, then asked:

"The light wagon is here, Mrs. Winter?"

"Yes, it's in the barn."

Mr. Jackson and Tom went to look at it. It was a very light spring wagon, quite long.

"Tom, you go back to camp and tell Mr. Kinsman and Mr. Sumner of the predicament



"AT THE CALL OF 'ASSEMBLY'"

of our friends. Get their permission to carry out my plans."

He then carefully instructed Tom, who rode hastily back to camp. When the Wardens heard his story, Mr. Kinsman at once said:

"There will be nothing better for the boys than this opportunity. They are restless today, and the usual routine is dragging. Take charge, Tom."

Captain Warren buckled on his sword, and Bugler Russell blew assembly. The Captain stepped before the company and made this explanation:

"Our friend Mr. Hoyt, with a large party is about four miles away. His car has broken down. We are to go to his rescue. We must make a quick march. Quartermaster, bring out the emergency rations."

Inwood disappeared into his tent, and soon emerged bearing a large tin box. The surprised and eager boys watched him with interest. To each one he gave a large cake of chocolate, in its original wrapper. They were told to put the chocolate in the pockets of their shirts.

Captain Warren then began his instructions.

"Lieutenant Harding, march your platoon to Mr. Winter's farm. I shall command the other platoons. Corporal McGuire, mount a wheel, and accompany Lieutenant Harding. Sergeant

Ewing, mount the other wheel as my orderly! Wait!"

Turning to Mr. Kinsman, he said, "I beg your pardon, sir, I did not intend to issue an order contrary to your discipline."

Mr. Kinsman smiled. "I know you did not. The sentence upon Sergeant Ewing, however, was that he was not to leave camp without orders. There is no reason why the Captain's order should not stand, is there, Mr. Sumner?"

"None whatever. The Captain is in command."

Tom hesitated. "If you will understand that I have no desire to go contrary to your wishes, I will repeat the order. Sergeant Ewing, mount the wheel."

It was too much for Pat McGuire. Breaking all rules, he raised his hat and shouted, "Three cheers for our Wardens!"

They were given with a hearty good will. Ewing, red with embarrassment, stood with wheel ready. The command was given to march.

As the two Wardens turned away to their tents to await the return of the company, and to arrange for the dinner of their guests, Mr. Sumner turned to Mr. Kinsman and laughingly remarked:

"John, that was a stroke of genius. That will

do more good for the spirit of loyalty in this camp than a score of punishments."

The first platoon, on reaching Mr. Winter's, found a light spring wagon in the yard, with two baskets of apples on it and a can of milk. Pat was seated on the wagon, having ridden ahead on the wheel to report progress. A long rope, knotted every few feet, was attached to the axle.

"We are going to the rescue of our friends," remarked Mr. Jackson, simply. "Campbell, you and Ross take the wagon pole and the others the rope."

"Yes," said Pat, "we are about to deliver apples and milk to the perishing. We are the Rural Free Delivery of Agricultural Products."

"Get off that wagon, Pat," shouted Harding. "We offer no chromos with our goods. Get off."

Pat climbed off, and mounted the wheel. At double time the wagon was whirled into the road. Ross and Campbell had difficulty in steering at first, but soon caught the knack. The boys struck a steady trot for a distance and then resumed a brisk walk. Quickly they sped along.

* * * * *

Captain Warren had marched his two platoons toward the stranded car. When about a mile and a half from Mr. Winter's, he commanded the second platoon to halt at the road

side. He went on at a steady march, route step, with the third. He had sent Ewing forward on his wheel to tell Mr. Hoyt help was coming.

Scarcely had the third platoon fairly started from the place where the second rested, than a speck appeared on the road in the distance. It was soon seen to be Fred, pumping away on his wheel, and speeding with a message. He dashed up, dismounted and, saluting, reported:

"Mr. Hoyt and his party are waiting about two miles and a half from here. I have informed them that help is at hand."

* * * * *

In the meantime the wagon was bumping over the road. The boys began, after a while, to show signs of fatigue and the pace was slower. Suddenly they spied a group waiting in the shade of a tree, one hundred yards ahead. With a shout they made a dash and the wagon was hauled at a great speed to the tree and halted.

The second platoon took up the rope. In that moment of change Mr. Jackson emptied a heap of apples on the grass and ordered the first platoon to rest there and await the return of the party. Jimmy Harding announced that the time of the first relay was twenty-two minutes.

The second stage of the journey was made very quickly by the enthusiastic boys. Mr. Jackson went on with this relay. In exactly

eighteen minutes they came to where Captain Warren awaited them with the third platoon. This platoon was reinforced by the general officers.

Here Mr. Jackson took Ewing's wheel and rode ahead to the waiting automobile. He came upon an impatient but happy party. As he grasped Mr. Hoyt's hand, he said:

"This is not the way to Cleveland."

Everyone laughed. He greeted Mrs. Hoyt and the daughters, and then met the others. There were four girls, nieces of Mr. Hoyt, not yet out of school. They were Louise and Elsie Seymour, and Edith and Margaret Stevens.

"You will soon be rescued, Mr. Hoyt. Relief is on the way."

"You are our Knight-errant, Mr. Jackson," said Miss Marion Hoyt. Mr. Jackson looked pleased.

"The girls wanted to walk to camp, but I thought it too far," remarked Mrs. Hoyt. "Did you have any difficulty in getting horses?"

"We have a horseless wagon for you, Mrs. Hoyt," responded Mr. Jackson, with a smile.

"In that case, it should be here soon," said Mr. Hoyt. "I didn't know that any motors were available in this part of the country."

"Necessity is the mother of invention, Mr. Hoyt."

A cloud of dust down the road attracted their attention. Soon the wagon came into view, vigorously pulled by the rapidly moving boys.

"Oho! that's your horseless carriage. You shall pay for that, young man," shouted Mr. Hoyt, gleefully.

The meeting of the two parties was a joyous occasion. Introductions were made, and the officers at once began to look after the comfort of the party.

Apples were passed about and glasses of milk, which were gratefully received.

There was much discussion as to who should ride. Mr. Jackson insisted that Mr. and Mrs. Hoyt take the seat of the wagon. It was finally agreed that the young people should ride and walk by turns.

Mr. Hoyt looked worried. Finally he said to Mr. Jackson: "I do not like to leave this machine here in this deserted place. I think I'll stay here, until I can get help."

"If you will let me arrange matters, we can take care of things all right. I will leave McGuire and Ewing here, with their wheels. They will take charge. We can reach Portage on the telephone from Mr. Winter's and ask for help. Mr. Winter can haul in the machine." So it was arranged.

Before making the start back to camp, Mr.

Hoyt transferred two large boxes from the tonneau of his machine to the wagon.

Slowly the strange party proceeded along the road, a spring wagon filled with the guests, pulled by a long line of youthful soldiers. They came at length to the second platoon, who took hold of the rope also. Progress was more rapid now because of the additional help. When they reached the refreshed first platoon, the third platoon was ordered to halt and rest. It had traversed the whole distance.

The first and second platoons soon whirled the light wagon into camp. Dinner was ready. Scarcely five minutes behind them came the third platoon. They had been too impatient to rest long.

After dinner, Mr. Hoyt went to Mr. Winter's and made arrangements for the whole party to spend the night. He, himself, had been invited to spend the night at camp.

The young people began to enjoy themselves. Mr. Jackson escorted Miss Marion Hoyt about the camp, while Mr. Sumner did the same for Miss Catherine. Tom, Joe, Leo Inwood and Dick Brewer made the day pleasant for the younger girls. Louise Seymour and Tom, with Joe and Elsie Seymour, climbed the hill, and the girls listened to a modest account of the sham battle. Edith Stevens found Leo's account

of his duties as a spy equally interesting, while Margaret Stevens made Dick give the history of the fire.

Late in the afternoon all gathered again. Soon Pat and Ewing came riding in. The automobile was in the safe hands of a mechanic from a Portage garage.

"That auburn haired boy looks interesting," remarked Elsie Seymour.

Joe at once called Pat to join the group. The older members gathered near. Pat was polite and answered several questions about the camp.

"Who was the boy on the wheel with you?" asked Edith Stevens.

"He is the great missing link," was Pat's reply, "Fred Ewing."

"Tell them about it, Pat," said Tom.

So Pat began. At first it was a simple story of facts, but as Pat warmed to his work, a twinkle came to his eye, and fancy began to weave itself to fact. The interested group drew nearer. Mrs. Marshall and Anna and the Wardens were now listening to Pat's recital. Pat's imagination was fired. Casting aside all reserve and veracity, he launched into the realm of fantasy:

"We were now in the heart of the forest. We could hear the wild beasts scamperin' away ahead of us. The Wardens, deadly pale, were meditating a retreat (here Pat cast a sly glance

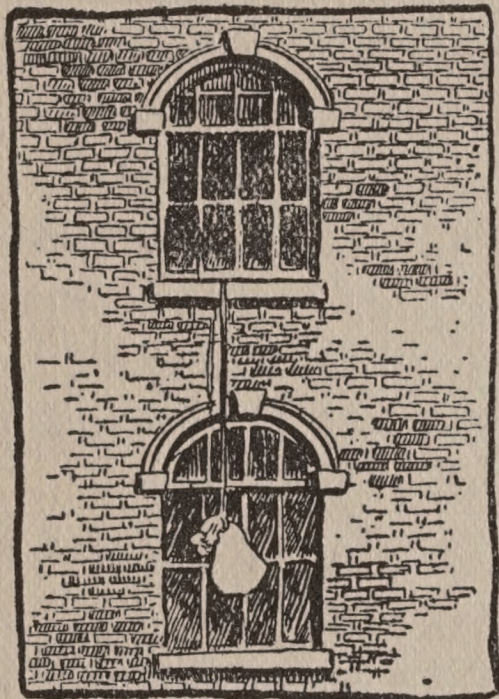
in their direction), when some red headed Celt called, 'Forward!' We plunged as one man through bushes and over logs. There was no reshtrainin' us. At last, when we had fired our last shot, and had worn out our voices callin', we burst into a clearing, lighted by the clear light of the silvery moon. There, pacing up and down, his arms folded on his breast like Napoleon at Waterloo, vainly endeavoring to feel his way and clutching wildy at the bushes, while with one hand he reached for the knife in his boot leg, shtood the immovable Fred, gazing darkly at the stars."

Pat beat a hasty retreat amidst gales of laughter. Elsie gave one look after him.

"Won't he come back?" she asked, quietly.

CHAPTER XVIII.

ABOUT THE CAMPFIRE



After supper the bonfire was piled high with great pieces of wood, and a jolly party gathered at Headquarters. Even Mrs. Marshall and Mrs. Hoyt had consented to pay the camp an evening visit. Mr. Hoyt opened his boxes which were found to contain candies. They were dis-

tributed among the boys.

Mr. Jackson found a comfortable camp stool for Marion Hoyt, and sat on the ground beside her. Pat strolled toward the group, his red hair carefully brushed, and his face shiny with soap and water. Many of the boys went to bed early, tired out from the strenuous experiences of the last twenty-four hours. But the officers were all on hand. Each young lady had an escort on the right and left. Pat found a comfortable place near Elsie.

Mr. Hoyt had been the life of the party. He

made himself exceedingly popular with the boys by his cordial manner. At supper he had fallen in behind the company, with a plate and other necessities borrowed from Mr. Jackson, and had received his rations at the serving table.

The group indulged in general conversation and laughing comments for a short time. Mr. Hoyt soon began to tell a story to Anna Marshall. But the others caught the opening words and all stopped to listen. Those of the boys who had not gone to sleep had gathered about the outer edge of the circle.

"I didn't go to one of these new fangled colleges, where they make a man turn up his trousers and go bare headed in order to matriculate," began Mr. Hoyt. "My college was one of the original kind that Noah took into the ark with him. We ate when we got through studying, instead of studying when we got through eating and drinking. The fellows then knew more about who scored a touch down at Thermopylae and less about the Harvard-Yale games. Our tutors made us shake hands across the sea with Latin grammar, until we knew all the exceptions well enough to call them by their first names. Nor could we stay out at night, sky-larking around with a banjo and a few mandolins, and singing sentimental songs to the college widows. Our President would have had us expelled for

scandalous conduct if we had done that. No, we were the plain and unornamented students. The older of us grew wavy side whiskers, to make us resemble the celebrated divines whose portraits adorned the walls of our assembly room. Our clothes were the kind mother used to make.

"We all lived in a great dormitory, with a tutor in every division to keep order, and to help us with our sums. Some of the tutors were decent fellows, but for the most part they were men who looked upon college boys as an evil to be tolerated. For our clothes and whiskers had not subdued in us the taint of original sin, and we had the same high spirits that prompt boys to do all sorts of mischief. But we were most of us what I might call artificial sinners. We didn't indulge in any real wickedness, but we sometimes managed to make good Latin of ourselves by being exceptions to the faculty rules. We were irregular verbs, as it were.

"Now these tutors didn't realize that the boys were of more consequence than the rules, so sometimes when a tutor came along humming to himself, the opening of Virgil's epic:

"Arma virumque cano, Troiae qui primus ab oris."

"Or when he was indulging in a slight intellectual recreation by rehearsing the corrolaries

of geometry in the hallway, and he spied a boy about to awaken fresh enthusiasm in a classmate by emptying a bucket of water on his head from an upper window, the poor tutor reached in his pocket, drew out a six shooter rule and let the offender have all six shots. It was too bad.

"Such attentions got on our nerves somewhat, and our tutors did not come in for that share of love and esteem that the college chaplain urged us to show toward our governors and teachers.

"One of the stringent rules of our dyspeptic guardians was that nothing to eat should be brought into our rooms in the dormitory. Our faculty thought that eating in the dormitory would not only be a cause of disaster to our youthful constitutions, but would hinder the orderly progress of our minds toward the heights of knowledge. So stringent were they about this, that you might have thought that eating in the dormitories had been the cause of every revolution and catastrophe from the plagues of Pharaoh to the panic of '73, and that abstinence from eating between meals had been the cause of every good, from Magna Charta to the Declaration of Independence."

Here Mr. Hoyt paused.

"I'll tell you the rest tomorrow night," he added after a moment.

Cries of protest arose, so he resumed.

"Well, one particular day, several of us took a walk into the country. It was a cold clear day and a light fall of snow had mantled the earth with a robe as pure as ermine. The branches of the leafless trees were

" 'Boughs that shake against the cold,—
Bare, ruined choirs where late the sweet
birds sang.' "

"Upon the distant hill tops, purple against a leaden sky were dimly seen—"

"Richard," interrupted Mrs. Hoyt, laying a hand affectionately on his arm and smiling, "please go on with the story, and stop rehearsing that old essay of 'Winter.' "

"You see," said Mr. Hoyt, "that's as far as I can carry the description as I have a standing agreement with Mrs. Hoyt that she is to interrupt me at that point. Hanged if I know what was on the distant hill tops. Well, to resume, a solitary turkey liked our looks, in spite of home spun clothes, and insisted on accompanying us. 'Poor bird, so far away from home,' said we, 'why can we not offer him shelter?' We acted upon the thought, and with care provided a place in the college basement. There were enough farmers in our crowd to know what to do to make a turkey serve his fellow men, and they did it. That same evening, when the shades of night had fallen, we slipped our turkey into

a pan, and placed him on the stove in my room. Seven or eight boys assembled for the ceremony. All was quiet in the dormitory. Below us a group of boys were studying for examination. They had not been invited to the feast.

"Just as our turkey had turned to a glowing brown, we heard a slow footstep in the corridor. The restless tutor, like a war horse scenting the battle from afar, had forgotten his prejudices so far as to allow the delicate odor of roasting turkey to enter his nostrils. He had been alone on the floor above. He came and knocked on our door.

"Hastily I seized our turkey and thrusting him into a pillow slip, I tied the mouth of the slip with a bit of rope and hung him out of the window; thrust the pan into my trunk, locked it, and admitted the tutor.

"His eyes glowed when he stepped into the room. The air was heavy with the fragrance of the roast turkey.

" 'Gentlemen,' he began, in a thin, squeaky voice, 'you are disobeying the rules of the faculty by having eatables in this room.'

" 'Mr. Hudson,' I replied boldly, 'so far as I know there is nothing to eat in this room.'

"He gave me one scornful glance and began to search.

"For half an hour he questioned and searched.

Into every corner he peeped. At last he said icily:

“‘I seem to be mistaken. Goodnight.’ He then withdrew.

“In the meantime, honest students, in the room below, poring over the annals of ancient Rome, were aroused from their studies by the gentle flapping of some white object against the window pane. Their studious frame of mind prompted them to investigate the strange phenomenon.

“I draw the veil over the result of their investigations. Even now that memory saddens my heart.

“We above, when the tutor had departed, built up the fire and got out our pan, ready to warm up our bird after having exposed him to the cruel winter winds. I opened the window, drew up the pillow slip, and opening it wide, I drew forth a picked carcass, a bundle of bones neatly tied, and a placard which had this simple, homely motto on it:

“‘Thanks; that was a good one. Send down another.’”

A peal of laughter greeted Mr. Hoyt's story.

“Tell us another, Mr. Hoyt,” came the request from all directions. But Mr. Hoyt shook his head, sadly.

“It brings to me too many memories of things

loved and lost." Then gaily, "Mr. Jackson, let us hear from you."

"I cannot paint a picture of college days, such as you have done," began Mr. Jackson, "because I belonged to the new fangled set. But our days were not without incident. We had in our faculty a man admired by all the students. He made himself agreeable to the boys and joined in their games whenever possible. It so happened that his keen sense of humor permitted him to laugh slyly at those unexpected incidents with which students sometimes enlivened the dull profession of teaching.

"But 'the Doctor,' as we called him, was seldom the victim. His shrewd good sense saved him. Being a younger man, he found companionship among the older boys. One night he started with two students to visit a friend in the village. There was a short cut across a field from the campus to the house. It was a dark night. The Doctor was leading the way. One of the students called out, 'Doctor, go slowly. I think there is a barbed wire fence across here somewhere.' The Doctor promised to be careful. Very soon his foot struck some object. Feeling about, he said, 'Yes, here must be the fence, for here is a stile.' He mounted the three steps which he had found. But not being able to find the way to descend on the other side, he

called out, 'Hazzard, strike a light.' Hazzard did so, and there, in the middle of the field, with no fence of any sort near, balanced on one foot, and reaching about with the other, stood the Doctor, on the top step of a little wooden, three tiered flower stand.

"Hazzard being very good at description, and Charles, his companion, being equally desirous that the lamp of truth should shine where it would do the most good, were not reluctant to relate the incident to the whole college. But the Doctor laughed with the rest, and the affair was forgotten, but only by those who never heard Hazzard tell it. And Hazzard has never ceased telling it."

"Good," said Mr. Hoyt, as the laughter subsided. "I should like to know that Doctor. Does he like to fish? If so, I'll hunt him up. Come, now, Mr. Sumner."

Mr. Sumner hesitated. "You have a good store, Mr. Hoyt. It's your turn again."

"Please, Mr. Sumner," urged Miss Catherine.

Mr. Sumner yielded. "In the little college that I attended in Massachusetts, there was one member of the faculty, who lived a quiet, domestic life. He had an admirable wife, and they were much respected in the community. It was noised about the college one day, that in the near future, Mr. Eaton and his wife would celebrate

their twenty-fifth wedding anniversary. This news caused some activity among the students. They learned that it would occur on Saturday, May eighteenth. In the noon mail of that day were many large envelopes addressed to various members of the faculty and to many people living in the village. They read, simply:

“ ‘Mr. and Mrs. Eaton desire the pleasure of your company for dinner at six o’clock, on the evening of Saturday, May eighteenth, being the twenty-fifth anniversary of their marriage.’ ”

“As the people read their cards, the usual comment was something like this: ‘How characteristic of Mr. and Mrs. Eaton. They wanted their friends, but they gave them no opportunity to plan for a gift.’ ”

“So Mr. and Mrs. Faculty, and Mr. and Mrs. Townsfolk, dressed in their best clothes, began making their way to the hospitable home of the Eatons. The President of the college arrived first, which he deemed it his duty to do. It was a few minutes before six. Mr. and Mrs. Eaton received them graciously, and were pleased with the congratulations of the courteous President and his kindly wife. Very soon other members of the faculty began to arrive. Mr. and Mrs. Eaton, with quiet friendliness, greeted them and asked them all to be seated. When the townsfolk arrived the company spread from sitting

room and parlor, by sheer force of numbers, into the dining room. A faint odor of fried onions was noticeable in the dining room, which was adjacent to the kitchen.

"Still the door bell rang, and guests were admitted until the house could hold no more. Mr. and Mrs. Eaton were becoming embarrassed. It was now half past six, and the guests were growing hungry and uneasy. Had Mr. and Mrs. Eaton overestimated their facilities for entertaining? There was a general flutter of that sparing and padded conversation, all according to the rules, and no one playing off-side. At last the disturbed Mrs. Eaton seized her nearest friend, one whom she trusted, took her to the kitchen, into the very remote corner, and pleadingly said, 'Please tell me what we are to do? What does this all mean?' Her friend gave a gasp, a great light dawning. She blurted out the question, 'Did you not invite us to dinner?'

"Mrs. Eaton turned pale. 'Why, no. I have asked no one for dinner.' The friend said firmly, 'Mrs. Eaton, go right to your husband and stand beside him. I'll fix this.' In a moment Mrs. Eaton took her place. The friend got her own husband, and whispered a few words to him. I am sorry to say, he gave a short convulsive laugh. She then said to her nearest neighbors, the Professor of Latin and his wife:

“ ‘Please do exactly as I do, and ask no questions.’

“She stepped up to Mr. Eaton and holding out her hand, said so clearly that every one in the room could hear:

“ ‘We have enjoyed this privilege of greeting you, in your house, on this occasion. I wish you both all good things.’

“Her husband did likewise, and they started for the door. The Professor of Latin and his wife, amazed but obedient, did the same. The other guests, stunned, followed like so many sheep. Soon the house was empty, and a group of students, lounging at the nearest corner, as the procession of departing guests drew near, started the gentle college song, which begins:

“ ‘How can I bear to leave thee.’

“The students later took up a collection among themselves to pay for printing and postage.”

“Mr. Sumner,” said Miss Catherine, her eyes sparkling, “I think that was real mean of you.”

It took Mr. Sumner some time to explain how innocent was his part in the affair. He had merely suggested it. Others had carried it out.

Cries of “Mr. Kinsman, Mr. Kinsman,” were heard. He knew it was useless to refuse, so he began at once.

“When I was in Kenyon, it was in the old days before the college was equipped so beautifully

as it is today. We carried our own fire wood, and hauled water from the pump. The fine old dormitory building, with its associations of many famous men, was a veritable fortress of massiveness and strength. College life within those gray walls was very intense. College spirit ran high. In summer nothing was more beautiful than the great, ivy-covered building, looking out over the green campus and the long row of trees on the middle path. The view up and down the valley from the college windows was a never failing source of pleasure to the tired student, lying in his broad window seat. For the thick walls made possible a window seat upon which many a student spent the night in sleep.

"There was one fellow in our class at Kenyon, who was a practical joker. It was he, who opening a package in his room and finding a dozen of his room mate's pictures, just delivered by a photographer, sent one to each of twelve girls at Harcourt School, the young ladies' seminary in the village. Henry it was, likewise, who stole into a room where a senior was taking an afternoon nap, and set his watch and clock three hours ahead. The senior had been invited to dinner with the President at six. Upon waking, he saw his clock and watch both pointing to half past five. At three o'clock exactly, he presented himself in evening clothes at the President's door.

It was Henry, also, who bored a hole in the floor of one room and through the ceiling below, and each year when a freshman occupied the room below, and was in his bed slumbering peacefully, it was this same practical joker who poured a cup of molasses through a funnel directly on the sleeping freshman's placid face. Henry urged the freshmen to learn their Catechism and then sent them to the embarrassed President to recite it. He, likewise, with assistance, during the absence of the occupant, moved every scrap of furniture from one room across the hall into another room, and set it exactly as it had been. They took everything but the stove. When the occupant returned, he was dumbfounded to find his room empty, and equally dumbfounded to find his effects in perfect order across the hall. It took that freshman three days to decide whether it were easier to move his furniture to his stove or move his stove to his furniture. He was not without conflicting advice all suggested by our joker. It was his same original genius that prompted him, one winter's night, to turn the college bell upside down, fill it with water and allow it to freeze. The imprisoned clapper on that bell awoke no students the following morning. Henry always organized the annual 'snipe hunt,' in which a poor freshman, who had been

invited to join a large party of upper classmen, was taken after dark by a devious path to a field and there left in a corner to hold a sack into which the others said they would soon drive the 'snipe' from the further sides of the field. The upper classmen quickly made their way home. The freshman followed more leisurely. Henry invented the practice of telling the freshmen that after Church all freshmen were expected to walk home with the girls from Harcourt School on the very first Sunday, thus promoting that friendliness which ought to exist between the college and the girls' school. He would stand on the side lines after service, and watch the embarrassed efforts of a few freshmen to break into that line of girls, a line jealously guarded by the vigilance of a whole corps of sharp-eyed teachers. But, like all jokers, he once ventured too far. He had tried his skill on Big Dave, a true blue Irishman, from County Tyrone. Henry, openly, in a small group, planned a midnight supper, at which he assigned to each fellow, some eatables. To Dave he assigned lemons, sugar and crackers. Each fellow was supposed to provide what was assigned. To all but Dave he gave some secret instructions. When the boys appeared about ten, their packages were placed unopened on a table. All but Dave's. His lemons were soon made into lemon-

ade, sweetened by the sugar. He then told Dave to pass his crackers, and to open the other packages. Dave did so, but the other packages contained nothing but old collars, empty bottles, and such non-eatables. Dave furnished the whole feast.

"Dave planned to get even. He looked Henry the joker, squarely in the eyes, and promised him a fair return. Henry only laughed. One night, a few weeks later, Dave summoned all the boys except Henry to his room. Dave then made them keep silent while he arranged something in the hall. The halls were dark, and every once in a while a boy would stumble over some obstacle. Henry had been particularly annoyed by this, and had sworn that if anything were left where he should stumble over it, he would throw it out of the window.

"Dave soon returned, and said, 'There's a trunk across the hall; now for some fun.'

"He then looked out of his door, and called:

" 'Henry, come quick!'

"Henry, on the floor below, and eager for any excitement, dashed up the stairs and ran along the hall. In a moment he was on the trunk. Headlong he went across it, onto the floor. There was a resounding crash as Henry struck the floor. We all waited breathlessly. Henry, evidently so mad he could not speak, picked up

the trunk, and hurled it down stairs. He followed and hurled it down a second flight and out onto the stone steps. Then seizing a stick of firewood, he battered that trunk for five minutes.

"Appeased, somewhat, he came upstairs through the hall, and into Dave's room. Dave was calmly smoking. The other boys were apparently unconcerned.

"'You fellows think you're bright. Well, I carried out my threat, and I don't care which one of you is the loser. There's not enough left of that trunk to start a fire with.'

"Dave said, calmly, 'Sit down, Henry. That's all right. We are not offended. It was your own trunk, Henry, that I borrowed for the occasion.'

"Dave was avenged."

As Mr. Kinsman finished, the bugle blew Tattoo, and the boys hastened to their tents. The others voted the evening a success, and prepared to depart. The ladies were escorted to the farm house, and the men and boy officers returned to camp.

That night about ten, Joe and Tom reported to Mr. Kinsman, and then with blankets and oilcloth and knapsack, and carrying a pickaxe and a spade, they quietly left the camp.

CHAPTER XIX.

THE DISCOVERY AT THE SENTINEL.



Tom and Joe soon reached the "Sentinel," and prepared to spend the night. They were tired and at once fell asleep, wrapped in their blankets. They had spread their oilcloth covering near the fine old tree, and they had felt a sense of protection in doing so.

When the sun's rays began to penetrate the forest early in the morning, the boys were aroused. Joe raised himself up, and looked at his watch. It was not yet four o'clock. But he knew that they had a hard task before them, so he called to Tom and prepared to get breakfast.

Carefully scraping away leaves and sticks from a large area, Joe took his pick and roughly dug up the earth in a circle about a yard in diameter. This was done to prevent the fire from spreading. In the center of the circle he placed dry leaves and small sticks, and soon a

cheerful little fire was blazing. It gave forth a grateful warmth to the boys who felt the dampness of the sharp morning air. For by this time Tom was up and busy with the food supply they had brought.

It took but a few minutes to arrange two forked sticks in the ground on opposite sides of the small fire. A large green branch, cut from a tree near by, furnished a stout pole to serve as a cross bar. Upon this Tom hooked the small tin pail in which he had brought the coffee which Blewie had made for them. He toasted a few pieces of bread at the coals, and on a small piece of tin, which he had fastened to a cleft stick, he fried some pieces of bacon.

If you have never tried fried bacon between pieces of toast, on a cool morning, out in the open, then you do not know what a feast is. Joe and Tom ate with great relish. The coffee was very good and the spirits of the boys rose as they ate.

Carefully cleaning their utensils, they prepared to make the investigation for which they had come.

Tom again took the compass and in daylight verified the observations made before at night. Now they had a tape measure, borrowed from Blewie, who had many unusual things in his kit.

At exactly ten feet from the tree, to the east,

they began to dig. Tom took the pick and Joe the spade. The ground was well packed and progress was slow. They decided to dig a trench about two feet wide. After half an hour of effort, Joe remarked:

"Tom, we must be down three feet. Get the measure."

Tom put a stick into the hole and measured. They were but twenty-seven inches down. With renewed vigor they began to go deeper. Soon the hole was three feet deep.

But there was nothing to be seen except the hard earth.

"This is a big job, Joe. If anything is buried here it may not be within a yard of this hole. Let me see the diagram again."

Tom looked at it long.

"Joe, you and I are babies in reading ciphers. Do you see this circle? It has the letter W to the right of N or North, and has not East at all. I believe that is a blind put there purposely to confuse a searcher."

"That's so," said Joe. "Do you think that our treasure, whatever it is, is actually west of the tree?"

"I do," answered Tom. "I think Uncle Ezra purposely said east when he meant west. The diagram shows W in the wrong place."

"That means another hole," was Joe's sad comment.

After careful measurement, the boys began to dig again. Slowly they worked; the heap of earth on the side grew higher and higher. Joe would work in the hole for a time only to give place to Tom.

Suddenly a blow from the pick in Tom's hand seemed to rebound. Surprised, Tom struck again at the same place. The pick had struck an obstacle.

"Joe," said Tom, in an excited whisper, as if awed, "I believe I have found something."

The two boys frantically dug into the earth with their hands. Sure enough, they uncovered a black, flat surface. With hearts beating fast, they endeavored to learn the nature of the object. But they could not without further digging.

"Tom, we must dig around this thing to get it out. We might as well go to work systematically."

Ten minutes' work revealed a stout, wooden box, somewhat rotted from being buried. It was about a foot and a half long, and a foot wide. They could not yet determine its depth. Still they worked on until they were able to insert their fingers under the end of the box. Lifting with all their strength, they loosened the box

from its bed, and with great rejoicing placed it on the green grass.

The boys were so startled by the success of their efforts, that for a long time neither ventured to hint at further investigation.

"What do you suppose is in it, Joe?"

"No idea. It is a good, strong box."

"Ought we to open it?"

"I don't know. We might break off a corner."

Acting upon this suggestion, Tom struck the box with the pick and loosed a board. Curiosity now overcame them, and they uncovered one side. The box seemed to contain nothing but paper. Pulling this out, they reached a small despatch box. Joe held this up and looked at it.

"Here is our mystery, Tom. I presume we ought not to try to open this. We ought to take it to Uncle Russell."

"We have a whole day to ourselves, Joe. What time is it?"

"Eight o'clock."

"Let's catch the train for Portage, and see your Uncle Russell."

The boys quickly acted upon this suggestion. They wrapped the tin box in paper and made their way to the river, then along the bank to the railroad track. They soon reached the station. The train was not due for three-quarters of an hour.

Tom suddenly exclaimed, "Joe, have you any money?"

"Not a cent."

"Neither have I."

Joe, without a word, scrambled to the top of the box car.

"Tom, of all luck. There are some fellows on the hill, doing signal practice. Get a newspaper from the agent."

Joe climbed down, and found a stick. He fastened upon it the paper which the agent had given Tom, and again mounted the car.

He was unsuccessful at first in attracting attention. Soon, however, the boys on the hill stopped signaling. Were they watching?

Joe waved his improvised signal flag, "Y. C.—Y. C.—Y. C." That was the camp call.

At once came a response, "Yes."

Joe then sent his message.

"Ask Mr. Kinsman to please send orderly with one dollar to station. Warren."

The answer came, "O. K."

It was but a few minutes before Pat McGuire wheeled up before the station with a crisp dollar bill in his hand.

Tom wrote a little note to Mr. Kinsman, saying they were going to Portage on important business but would return on the afternoon train.

Pat wheeled away, and the boys bought their tickets and soon were in the train.

On arriving at Portage they went directly to Colonel Russell's house. He was at home, and received them in the library.

Joe went at once to business.

"Uncle," he said, "Tom and I found this box buried at your farm. We have brought it to you."

"Bless my heart!" exclaimed the Colonel. "Where did you find it?"

Joe drew out the parchment and quickly told the story. Uncle Russell listened quietly but with great interest.

"We shall open this box," was his only comment.

Uncle Russell then sent for Jerry and a pair of stout pincers, and the lid was soon pried off.

Inside the box was a small package wrapped in oiled silk, with the name "Ezra Russell" printed on the white tape with which it was bound.

Cutting the tape the Colonel unwrapped the silk and found three envelopes. One was marked "Personal" and the second had no mark. These envelopes were filled with papers.

The third envelope was not so well filled, apparently. It had close fine writing on it.

The Colonel read it:

"In case of my death, whosoever shall find this box and deliver it to Colonel Russell or any reliable attorney, unopened, shall be entitled to the contents of this envelope."

"Well, boys, I guess that envelope is yours," he said, handing it to Joe.

Joe took it, looked at it, and gave it to Tom.

"It's part yours, Tom, whatever it is."

Tom held it a moment and handed it back.

"You open it, Joe."

With trembling fingers, Joe opened it. He drew out a heavy bit of folded paper, and unfolding it he found it was covered with printing and scroll work.

"What is it, Uncle?"

The Colonel gave but one glance.

"It is a stock certificate for two shares in the Portage Bank. It is worth about four hundred dollars. It has been signed in blank for transfer. Each of you is virtually owner of one share of the bank stock. I congratulate you."

The astounded boys hardly believed their senses. They were getting their reward. Joe asked Uncle Russell to keep it for them until they returned from camp.

"You are sure it is ours?"

"Quite sure. As to these other papers, I shall take time to go over them carefully, and I shall



"THE YOUNG PEOPLE BEGAN TO ENJOY THEMSELVES"

go out to the camp on Sunday. You may expect me. I shall then tell you what I find. I want to say, too, that I think you deserve your reward for your efforts."

The boys left exultant. "Joe, we are rich," said Tom, excitedly. "I may be able to go to college now."

"And I'll go, too, Tom."

So planning and rejoicing in the culmination of their efforts, they went to their homes for lunch. The families were surprised to see them. The boys did not tell the secret, but said that business had brought them home.

They took the afternoon train and reached camp in time for supper. They quietly reported to Mr. Kinsman.

"Well, boys, was it a wild goose chase?"

"No, sir, it was a great stroke of luck. We cannot tell you about it now, but we shall before the camp ends. Colonel Russell will be out on Sunday."

The guests again visited camp after supper. The long twilight gave much opportunity for pleasant walks and conversations.

Warren and Louise Seymour strolled up the hill and sat and watched the activity of the camp.

"We were at the camp to see the drill this morning. You were not here. I thought the Captain had to be on hand," began Louise.

"Joe and I were excused this morning."

"Uncle was asking for you. He said he did not see you at breakfast."

"No, we were not at breakfast. Did you enjoy the drill?"

"Now, see here, you are trying to change the subject."

"Not at all; Joe and I were not here this morning."

"Uncle said he looked into your tent to find you before breakfast, and the other boys said you had not been there all night."

"No, Joe and I were on special duty."

"Please tell me about it," said the fair Louise.

"Well, we had permission to go away for twenty-four hours. We left at 10 last night."

"Didn't you get any sleep?"

"We slept in the woods under that big tree," pointing at it.

"What, you two boys in those woods?"

Tom was compelled to tell of their camp in the woods and their breakfast. He did not give any clew to their errand, however.

In the meantime the other girls and a squad of boys had gathered around Mr. Hoyt, near the fire.

Pat had been a gallant courtier to Elsie, when he had the chance, and he and Joe were now doing the honors. Pat as usual was eager for fun.

"Joe, it isn't true that you were sent home this morning, is it?"

"You know better than that, Pat."

"I was afraid Miss Elsie would hear the reports, and would think ill of ye, Joe," said Pat.

Joe indignantly gave Pat a scorching glance.

"Miss Elsie knows who's more likely to be sent home."

"Now, I don't think either of you will be sent home," was Elsie's cautious remark. "You are too much needed in the camp to make things lively, so I hear."

But Pat was not disturbed. "Joe was not in camp last night. I was afraid Mr. Kinsman might hear of it."

"Mr. Kinsman knew of it. Stop your nonsense, Pat," and Joe began to warm up.

"That's all right, Joe, me boy, you're intirely blameless. We said that at once. We are all your friends, Joe."

Joe was now thoroughly worked up. Forgetting all the consequences, he blurted out:

"Tom and I spent the night under the tree in the woods, and went into Portage this morning."

"Oh, that's it, is it?" and Pat gave Joe an indulgent look. "So you see, Miss Elsie, they were not robbing chicken roosts."

"No, indeed" asserted Elsie. "I did not believe that."

Joe, with a queer look in his eye, asked rather too gently:

"What time is it, Pat?"

Pat pulled out his watch. "It is just seven."

"Have you noticed Pat's watch, Miss Elsie? It has a beautiful case."

Elsie tried to look at it. Pat hastened to return it to his pocket.

"Let Miss Elsie look at it, Pat. He's lucky to have it. He almost lost it as we started. Has Pat told you about it?"

Pat turned red, and said, "Oh, it was nothing."

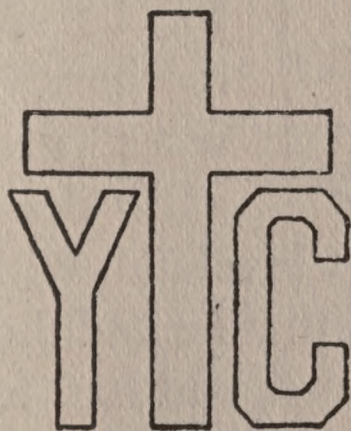
But Elsie insisted. "Please, Mr. Patrick, I should love to hear," and she did hear. Joe saw that no detail was omitted.

In the meantime, Edith and Margaret Stevens were toasting marshmallows at the fire and handing them to all who applied. There were many applicants. Mr. Hoyt and the others had a second meeting at Headquarters, but Mr. Kinsman and Anna were sitting quietly by themselves.

"I have told you the whole story, Anna. If we can ever get trace of the money my father sent home, it would make my mother independent."

"Well, John, we will hope. I know you are working hard. But I shall wait."

The evening passed rapidly and pleasantly. The visitors left as taps sounded, and the solitary sentry paced up and down, gun on shoulder, thinking of the splendid days and glorious nights of Camp Crusader.



CHAPTER XX.

EZRA RUSSELL'S TRUST.



On Sunday, true to his word, Colonel Russell appeared at camp. He came in his carriage, for he still clung to the vehicle of his fathers. He was accompanied by an elderly lady, who proved to be Mr. Kinsman's mother. Mr. Kinsman was greatly surprised and delighted. Mrs.

Kinsman lived in Cleveland, with a sister. The Colonel explained that he had thought she might want to see the camp, and had taken the liberty of asking her to take the morning train from Cleveland to Lynn's Crossing. He had there met her with his carriage.

Colonel Russell inspected the camp, complimented the boys and made himself very agreeable to the officers. Mr. Hoyt's whole party had made arrangements to stay until camp broke up. They had found delightful quarters at Mr. Winter's and at another farm house near by.

When the usual Sunday visitors had gone, Colonel Russell asked if he might have the privilege of entertaining the members of the camp with a story. They were all ready for this, and Mr. Sumner proposed that they bring out chairs and cots and gather about "Head-quarters" to hear the Colonel.

It was an interested company of listeners. Seated just inside the tent were Mrs. Kinsman, Mrs. Hoyt and Mrs. Marshall. Mr. Jackson had provided a comfortable place for Marion Hoyt, and the other girls likewise had no lack of attention. The boys made a great circle of cots about the outer edge of the group and sat quietly listening. No boy went swimming. They were all anxious to hear the Colonel.

Colonel Russell stepped before them and after bowing to the ladies, began his narrative.

"I fear that I may have to begin by telling some facts that may be known to many of you. I hope you will not grow tired if my story seems somewhat long.

"My brother, Ezra Russell, owned this farm. He was a good, true man, but one who loved variety and change of scene. He would spend a year in travel, and would then retire to this place to enjoy the beauties of simple rural life. In the course of his life he went all over the world, vis-

iting every country in turn, but always returning to this farm.

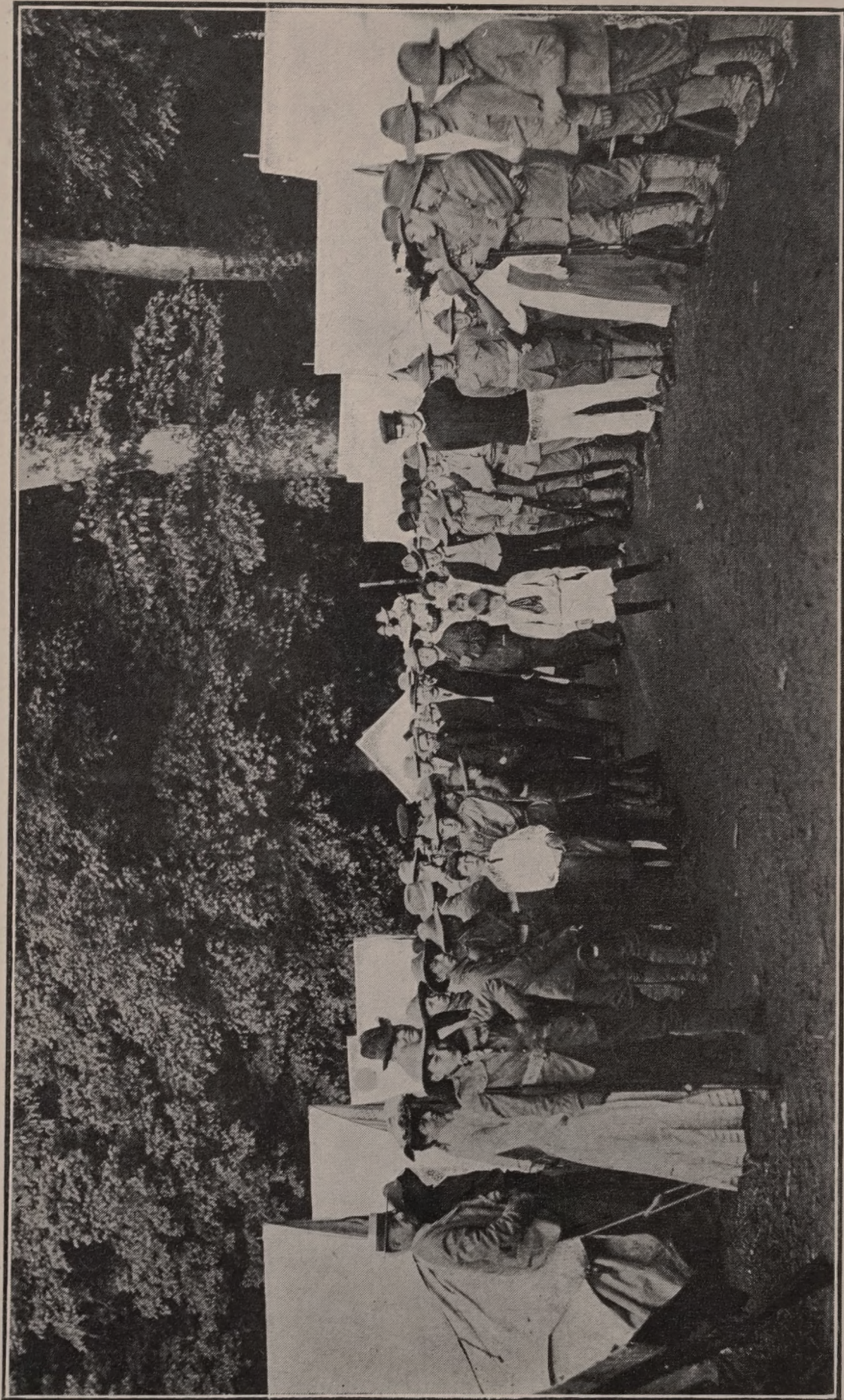
"At his death his farm came to me by his will. His old house I have moved to a spot more convenient to the road and it is let to tenants. I believe some of these charming young ladies are lodging there for the time being.

"I must now begin another story. There is in my house in Portage a large attic. The use of this I granted to my nephew, the famous aviator, and here he built 'Darius Green,' his glider, and here he conducted the experiments by which he rendered me a great service at the risk of his own neck. My nephew Joe also interested himself with Uncle Ezra's effects, mostly curios from foreign lands, which were stored there. In his investigations, he discovered this bit of paper."

Here the Colonel held up the cipher. All looked at it curiously.

Colonel Russell then proceeded to tell the story of the way in which the boys found the key to the cipher, and also found the box under the "Sentinel." The listeners were intensely interested, and the boys gasped with astonishment.

"There were two envelopes in that box which I have examined with great care. They contained papers, many of which were of a personal nature. One of them was an interesting state-



“VISITOR'S DAY AT ‘CAMP CRUSADER’”

ment which I shall read. This was written by Ezra Russell:

“‘Should any one, by any chance, ever discover the fact that I have buried this box, I want him to learn likewise my reason for doing so strange a thing. I have but few valuable papers. They are mostly in the Portage Bank. But I have in my keeping a strange story and a strange trust. I am writing now at the old farm, where I have been staying, doing my best to discharge that trust. All the papers relating to it I have with me. But I have been suddenly summoned from home. I have no time to put these papers into safe keeping. I am afraid to leave them in the house or to take them with me. So I am burying them by the Sentinel. On my return I shall dig them up. I realize this paper may never see the light of day.’”

The Colonel paused. “It did see the light of day, and through a strange bit of foresight on Ezra Russell’s part. On his return to Portage from that errand, he made this cipher and put it in his tin box. He knew that should anything happen to him, I should be the one to open the box. I remember very well the day I went with him and he put this paper in, smiling as he did so. ‘There’s a puzzle for you,’ were his words. ‘Use the signal code.’

"So it would have been no puzzle, had I found the paper, for as young men, Ezra and I learned and often used the signal code. It was only a few days after his return, and as we now know, before he had time to dig up the box, that he died very suddenly.

"But I did not find the mysterious paper, for it was beneath the false bottom of the box, as you know. It remained for Joe to do that. So the despatch box has been buried all these years.

"I hope you will be patient with me," said the Colonel, "if I seem to make the story long."

"You have interested us extremely, Colonel," said Mr. Hoyt. "Please do not neglect a single detail."

The Colonel continued: "A second paper found in the envelope contained a strange story. I shall read it to you." The Colonel unfolded a paper, and read:

"I, Ezra Russell, certify that the following is an exact and true statement.

"On a steamer in which I was traveling to Aden, as we were crossing the Indian Ocean, I was summoned by the ship's Captain to visit a sick man who desired to talk with an American. I was ushered into his stateroom. The Captain had left us, and only the Doctor was there. The man was unconscious. The Doctor, a German,

said to me, "This man is dying; he has been asking for an American; he wishes to ask a great favor of him. This dying man may never regain consciousness, but I know what he wants. If he were conscious, he would ask you to take this package to his family."

"The Doctor held up a small package. It had no name or address on it. It was so small I could easily slip it into my pocket. I summoned the Captain and told him of our strange predicament. An American Consul was on board on leave of absence. We took him into consultation. He agreed to be equally responsible with me for the safe delivery of the package. We instructed the Doctor to learn the address of the family if the man regained consciousness. But the man never rallied. The same afternoon he died.

"That night our boat struck a hidden reef, and a battle began with the great sea. It is not necessary to give the details. The boat was rapidly sinking when we were taken off by a passing steamer. I saved only a handsatchel, but the package was in it. All clue to the dead man's identity was gone. The ship's records were lost; the package alone might give a clue. I examined it, and found a thousand pounds in English bank notes, and a letter.

"Upon returning to America, I put the money in a bank in trust, and made every effort

to discover the identity of the man. I was unsuccessful in my search. The money is still in the bank. May the good God grant that it may find its rightful owner. Signed,

“‘Ezra Russell.’”

The Colonel paused. He held up a little book. “Here is the very book which has been buried in the ground all these years. It is a pass book of a Cleveland bank. Yesterday I went to Cleveland. The money is still there awaiting the owner.

“The letter that Ezra Russell found with the money was one written by a boy. I will not read it, but I consulted Uncle Ezra’s journal yesterday, also, and found out more about that wrecked ship. I learned the port from which it sailed. This information may prove valuable.

“I wish to say that I did read this boyish letter yesterday with rising interest. It was dated, but no address given and it was signed by no name. As it lay on my desk, I was struck by the similarity between the writing and that of a note I had received but a few weeks ago.

“Added to that,” continued the Colonel, “was the evidence of a story I had heard in Portage a while ago in regard to one of our most useful and esteemed citizens.”

Here the Colonel paused.

"Ladies and gentlemen, I am willing to state my own conclusions, which can be easily verified." He added, slowly and solemnly, "That wrecked ship had sailed from Melbourne, Australia. The dying man was Richard Kinsman. This bank book is the property of John Kinsman and his mother."

For a moment a gasp of astonishment arose from the crowd. John Kinsman buried his face in his hands. Mrs. Kinsman turned ashy pale, although the Colonel had somewhat prepared her for such startling news. A great light sprang into Anna Marshall's eyes. The whole group broke into cheers that resounded over the camp. Everybody insisted on shaking hands with Mrs. Kinsman and her son, and many who understood, shook hands with Anna, also.

For an hour the excitement continued. Colonel Russell was asked to read Ezra Russell's statement again. John Kinsman saw his letter written ten years before and remembered every word of it.

Finally he was composed enough to make a statement to the rejoicing friends.

"My mother and I wish to say that we are most grateful for your kindness. We can never sufficiently thank the boys and Colonel Russell for throwing light on what was to us a great mystery.

"We are more than thankful for definite news of my father, and his peaceful death, than we are for the money. But this was rightfully his and now it is mother's. It is proper to rejoice that a good man, for such he was, should be known to have lived honorably and to have died with such a true-hearted countryman at hand as Ezra Russell."

Nothing else was talked of in camp that night. Colonel Russell drove back to town taking Mrs. Kinsman and Mrs. Marshall with him that he might arrange for the legal steps which would be necessary.

John Kinsman and Anna took a long walk, in which they had a slight dispute about the relative merits of July and October. Mr. Kinsman was a firm advocate of the glories of July, and he won the debate at last.

Mr. Jackson and Marion saw them return. "See how radiant they are, Mr. Jackson."

"They will be married within a month, that's my guess."

"No doubt," was the response.

"What are you going to do, Mr. Jackson, this summer?"

"Oh, I have a great plan," was Mr. Jackson's whimsical answer. "I am going to buy a dozen spades and spend the summer here digging up

the whole place to see if Uncle Ezra left me a fortune, too. I envy John."

"You envy him his money?"

"Not at all; his fortune."

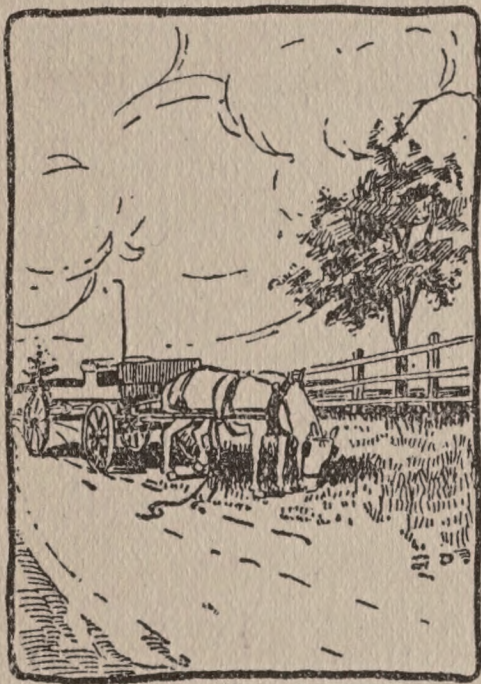
Marion, surprised into a blushing smile, said sweetly:

"Good luck to you; come, we must join the others."

And Mr. Jackson thought long about her words.

CHAPTER XXI.

A RUNAWAY.



On Monday afternoon, Pat McGuire and Dick Brewer took a long walk toward the village of Plainville, which was about four miles distant. They were in excellent spirits and went briskly along the road, stopping now and then to pick the ripe raspberries that were abundant in the fence

corners. Every time they passed a farm wagon, both boys, according to the custom of the country folk, exchanged greetings with the travelers. The staid farmer and his wife generally exhibited a startled curiosity in regard to the two soldier boys, who so politely saluted them.

As they drew near to Plainville, they saw in the road ahead of them a horse and wagon, without a driver. The horse was wandering slowly along the highway, nibbling at the tall grass. Upon drawing near, the boys saw that the wagon

contained grocer's supplies. But they were scattered over the bottom of the wagon. Baskets had been upset, and broken eggs and butter, sugar and vegetables, were mixed together.

Pat took the bridle, while Dick made a casual survey of the ruin in the wagon bed.

"This has been a runaway, Pat. See those groceries?"

"It seems more like a walkaway, now. This horse must have bumped this wagon against every stone for a mile."

"There's no house near here. It probably came clear from Plainville. Jump in, and we'll drive back."

They mounted the seat, and Pat, taking the reins, turned the horse about. As they jogged toward the village, Pat remarked:

"I feel like Caesar in his chariot, entering Rome in triumph, with the spoils of victory."

"The spoils of many a family dinner, rather," suggested Dick.

They had gone but a short distance, when they saw two men in a buggy, rapidly driving towards them. The driver reined in his horse upon reaching them, and a very angry man, bare-headed and wearing a grocer's apron, leaped to the ground. He raised a threatening fist toward the astonished boys.

"I'll teach you young rascals to destroy my

property," he shouted. "You will find yourselves in jail in less than ten minutes. Get down off that wagon," and he began to drag Dick from the seat.

"But—but—but—" stammered the frightened Pat, as he rose, preparing to leap from the other side of the wagon.

"Don't make any excuse to me. You have done enough damage for one day. For two cents I'd give you a good thrashing," and he reached for the short whip.

"Hold on, Green," exclaimed the man in the buggy. "You are too excited. Put up the whip."

Green hesitated a moment. Pat and Dick were too scared to speak, or run.

"Look at those groceries. Ten dollars' worth. You'll pay for them, every cents' worth," and again the angry grocer shook his fist at the boys.

"But we didn't do it!" almost shouted Pat.

"That's a pretty thing for you to say. How came you on my wagon, then?"

"The horse was coming this way and we stopped him."

"You may tell that to the Justice of the Peace. Hatch, take those boys with you, and drive in. I'll drive the wagon."

Mr. Hatch gave the boys a quiet look.

"Come on, boys. Better get in."

The boys did so, and the cavalcade started for

Plainville. Mr. Hatch proved a kindly man and he listened to their story. They were reassured by his manner, and explained to Mr. Hatch about the camp, their walk, and the finding of the horse and wagon.

"Well, boys, just take my advice and simply tell how the thing occurred. You needn't tell who you are if you don't want to. I saw that old wagon at the store half an hour ago. I also saw some boys about, but I knew every one. I'll clear you."

Mr. Green seemed to grow angrier as he neared home. He was a ridiculous figure on his bespattered wagon, and he knew it. As they drew up and stopped at the store, a curious crowd gathered about them.

"I have them," he shouted. "I am going to make an example of the young rowdies who stole my wagon."

Mr. Hatch took the boys, one by each arm, into the store. Both Pat and Dick were cooler now. They knew they were innocent, and they had a friend. The crowd followed. It chanced that the Justice of the Peace was there, and Mr. Green at once began:

"Squire, those rascals druv' away my horse and wagon. I want 'em sent to jail."

The crowd was plainly in sympathy with Mr. Green. Strange boys were looked on with sus-

picion. There were many expressions of approval of Mr. Green's desire to lock up the boys.

"They ought to be licked first." "Make an example of them."

In the meantime Mr. Hatch had gotten the Squire's ear for an instant. The Squire seated himself in a big chair near the stove. Every barrel and box was occupied, and the villagers and farmers crowded about the counters. Mr. Green looked with visible displeasure at the practiced hands that were dipping into the open cracker barrel, but he dared do nothing while public sentiment was on his side.

"I guess we can see about this right here," began the Squire, with the ghost of a grin toward the boys, who were still under the protection of Mr. Hatch.

"What are your names?"

Pat answered promptly:

"Patrick McGuire, yer honor."

"And yours?"

"Richard Brewer."

"Mr. Green, will you please state your charges?" continued the Squire.

"I will. My wagon was filled with groceries, ready to be delivered, and these young mischief-makers got in, drove off down the road, and were actually on the wagon when I overtook them," and Mr. Green's anger arose, as he spoke.

Pat started up as if to reply, his face very red, but Mr. Hatch held him, saying quietly, "Wait."

Mr. Green's charge evidently had its effect on the group, as they were more unfriendly than ever. It seemed as if the boys might be facing a charge of theft.

"Young men, what have you to say to that? You, McGuire, first."

But Mr. Hatch interposed.

"Will you permit me to say a word, Squire? I drove Mr. Green out to recover the wagon."

"Certainly."

"Does Mr. Green swear to his testimony?"

"It is assumed that he is telling the truth."

"But he is somewhat excited," said Mr. Hatch, "and perhaps would like to modify his statement. He said these boys got into his wagon in front of the store, and drove off. Did you see them?" turning to Mr. Green.

"Didn't we see them on the wagon, Mr. Hatch? You were there."

"Yes, they were on the wagon, a mile from town. But you did not see them here."

"What if I didn't? They had the wagon."

"Quite right, Mr. Green. Another point. You said we overtook them."

"Why, you know we did. You drove me out."

"Yes," was Mr. Hatch's reply, "but you have led your friends here to believe that the boys

were driving away from town. In fact, they were driving toward town, were they not?"

"I guess they were," admitted Mr. Green.

"That's all for the present, Squire. Thank you."

"Now, McGuire," said the Squire, "what have you to say?"

Patrick had by this time realized that they were in no great danger of being jailed, as the questions of Mr. Hatch had put Mr. Green in a very curious position. The crowd showed more signs of friendliness toward the boys, and were plainly impressed by Mr. Hatch's questions and Mr. Green's admissions. So he plucked up courage and began:

"You see, yer honor, me friend and I were a'walkin' along the road, when we see a horse coming along, pulling a wagon. There was no driver. The horse was a'stoppin' now and then and a'croppin' at the grass. 'It's a horse,' says I to Dick. 'No,' says Dick, 'it can't be a horse. It's too thin. It's a toy ladder.'"

"Order," said the Squire, as a laugh arose. Mr. Green was now very red in the face.

"'Dick, it's a horse and wagon,' says I. So we looked in the wagon and, sure, there were dozens of eggs, all broken, mixed with other groceries. 'It's no florist's wagon, Dick,' says I, a'holdin' my nose. 'Eggs is eggs,' says Dick.

We turned the horse about and being willing to sacrifice ourselves, we got on the wagon and drove toward town. We met Mr. Hatch and the owner of the eggs coming in a buggy. They brought us here."

Pat had plainly won the crowd. Even the Squire could not maintain his dignity, but laughed.

Mr. Green glowered; he was evidently losing favor.

"I should like to add, Squire," said Mr. Hatch, "that I believe the young man has told the truth about his actions."

"Where do you live?" asked the Squire.

"In Portage."

"What are you doing here?"

"Merely taking a walk through the country," was Pat's evasive answer. He did not wish to connect the name of the Young Crusaders with the exploit.

At this point one farmer arose, an elderly man, and addressed the Squire:

"Squire, these boys are innocent. I can see no reason for your holding them a minute. Mr. Green has acted unfairly. The boys did him a favor. I am glad to know you," and he solemnly shook hands with Pat and Dick.

The Squire arose, saying, "You are quite

right. You are released, young men." He likewise shook hands with them.

The embarrassed boys were now the center of a group excitedly chatting over the affair. All but Mr. Green. He sullenly went to the rear of the store, and pretended to be very busy.

Mr. Hatch escorted the boys from the store, saying:

"Come over to my house for a little while."

He lived in a pleasant house a short distance away on the village street. Mr. Hatch brought out some apples and invited the boys to a rustic seat in the side yard. They told him more of the camp and did not forget to thank him for his kindness to them.

Mr. Hatch said that Mr. Green was an avaricious man, very irritable, and hasty tempered. He had been known as the meanest man in Plainville.

"You see that lot over there. It belongs to me. For two years Mr. Green has wanted it, and he offers me only three hundred dollars. The lot is worth five hundred dollars and I should like to sell it at that price. But he knows that I am a poor man, and he thinks if he waits long enough I shall be forced to sell. And I may, although I do not want to at that price."

Pat and Dick could not stay very long, as they had to return to camp in time for flag lowering.

They were obliged to take the afternoon train to Lynn's Crossing, and walk on from there.

Their new found friend went to the train with them. They thanked him again, and asked him to visit them. The villagers on the station platform waved them a farewell as the train pulled out.

On the road from Lynn's Crossing, Pat spoke hardly a word. He was deep in thought. As they turned in at the lane, he said, merely:

"Dick, that man Green will hear from us again."

"What will he hear, Pat?"

"I don't know yet, but trust me, Richard, me boy."

They told no one of their exploit, as they did not want to have the facts known.

That evening there arrived in camp a young man inquiring for Dick Brewer. It was his older brother, Ralph, who was a surveyor for the Valley Electric Traction Co. Ralph Brewer had been working in the neighborhood and had come to spend the night with Dick. He had his instruments, transit, reading rod, and flag pole.

Pat and Dick told Ralph of their adventure in Plainville. He laughed about it a good deal. He showed the boys his instruments, and allowed them to run a few levels about the hill.

During the evening Pat was seen to be deep

in thought. The usual festivities seemed to have no attraction for him. About eight o'clock he sought out Dick and asked him if he and his brother Ralph would take a walk into the grove.

Ralph readily agreed, and the two boys and the young man went a short distance from camp and sat under a maple tree. There Pat began:

"Mr. Brewer, have ye much to do tomorrow?"

"Not much, Pat. I had planned to go to Portage some time during the day."

"Would ye be willing to take a day off, and go to Plainville with Dick and me?"

"Would you be allowed to go?"

"I think if ye asked Mr. Kinsman for permission to take us for a day's work surveying, that he would allow ye to do it. Ye know he tried to teach us a little about it last year."

"I'll ask him, Pat. But what do you want to do?"

Pat here unfolded his plan. Ralph Brewer listened attentively. It was a plan worthy of an ingenious Irish lad. But Ralph was doubtful.

"You can never do it, Pat. It won't work."

"It will do no harm to try, and we'll enjoy the day."

"Well, we can try and hope for the best. But, Pat, the burden of it rests on you."

"Thank you, Mr. Brewer. I'll do my best. And now I'll have to do some more thinking."

They made their way back to their tents. Mr. Brewer asked Mr. Kinsman, and received permission to take the boys the next day. For the policy of the Wardens was to grant as many privileges as they could without interfering with the discipline.

Pat and Dick talked until the notes of Tattoo sounded over the camp. They agreed that they would not tell of their experience in Plainville, not because they were ashamed of it, but because they wished to keep the name of the Young Crusaders out of it. They were proud of their organization. The incident concerned themselves alone.

Pat did not go to sleep early that night. His busy mind kept going over the events of the day. He hoped to let Mr. Green hear from him, as he had promised. His thinking was not in vain, and when he raised his red head from the pillow at the sound of Reveille, it was filled with ideas that made him chuckle with glee.

CHAPTER XXII.

PAT'S REVENGE.



Immediately after breakfast the three conspirators set forth for their day's work. Pat carried the transit, while Dick took the flag pole and the reading rod. The flag pole was an iron rod about half an inch in diameter, and pointed at one end. It was painted red and white, so that it

could be easily distinguished when planted in the ground. Each one had been provided with a substantial lunch by Blewie.

The boys walked to Lynn's Crossing, greeting Mr. Winter, who was in his yard, as they passed. They caught the early train toward Cleveland, and alighted at Plainville. It was yet too early for the villagers to be about the station, so they made their way toward the open country without attracting any attention.

After getting away from the village they

rested under a tree by the roadside to further develop their plans for the day.

"We must be very careful not to allow ourselves to be discovered this morning by anyone but Mr. Green. How we are to manage it I don't know," and Pat stood looking with perplexity toward Plainville.

"Does he drive his delivery wagon himself, Pat?" asked Ralph Brewer.

"Probably. I saw no clerk in his store except a young lady."

"I have an idea," exclaimed Dick. "Ralph, you go to his store and buy something, and ask if he could deliver it. Get a barrel. Have it brought right here."

"I might try that."

So Ralph went quickly into the village. Plainville was a very small place, and had but four or five stores altogether. They were all on the main road.

Mr. Green was behind the counter when Ralph entered the store. The faithful horse was tied to a post before the store, ready for its day's work.

"Good morning," was Ralph's cheerful greeting.

"Morning," came the rather gruff response from the store keeper.

"Would you sell me an empty barrel and deliver it?" asked Ralph.

Mr. Green looked for a moment at Ralph, as if weighing his chance for profit.

"Where does it go?"

"Down the main street past the station to the edge of the village."

"Huh! That would be worth fifty cents."

Ralph paid the fifty cents, and then added:

"We should like to have it in twenty minutes."

"All right; I'll get it to you."

Ralph hastened back to the boys who were awaiting eagerly the word as to the success of his errand.

"He will deliver a barrel here, but I don't know that he will come himself."

Hastily he set up the transit, and sent Dick about 100 feet toward the village with the reading rod. It was but a few minutes before the horse and wagon appeared on the scene, and, as good luck would have it, driven by Mr. Green. Curiosity had gotten the better of the grocer, and he had come to find out what a man wanted with an empty barrel on the country road.

As Mr. Green pulled in his horse, Ralph was sighting through the telescope of the transit and waving his hand right and left. Pat stood near with a field book and was apparently taking down readings.

"Here's your barrel."

Both looked up. Mr. Green at once recognized the boy whom he had practically arrested the day before, but he said nothing. He had become very curious as to the reason for a survey over that road and he did not care to open hostilities. He did want to know, however, what the surveyors were there for.

"Thank you," said Ralph. "Pat, put the barrel on the grass near the fence."

"What are you surveying for?" blurted out Mr. Green, whose curiosity could no longer be restrained.

"I'm not at liberty to tell you, now," and Ralph looked up again. "Have you twine at your store?"

"Yes, certainly."

"Pat, ride back with the gentleman, if he will let you, and get a ball of twine."

Mr. Green was only too ready to have Pat go back with him. He might be able to discover the reason for the survey.

"Come on, young man. I reckon I was pretty hasty yesterday. Climb right in."

"May I drive, sir?" asked Pat, demurely, winking at Ralph.

"Of course. You've driven this horse before, eh?" and Mr. Green gave a dry chuckle.

Pat took the reins. "He won't run away, will

he?" Mr. Green glanced at Pat to see if he were making fun of him, but Pat's face was sober.

"No, drive ahead."

As they jogged back to the store, Mr. Green began to try to win Pat's favor, and at the same time to learn what he could.

"Do you like surveying, young man?"

"Very much. Especially on this part of the route."

("This part of the route." What did that mean? was the grocer's quick thought.)

"Your name is Patrick McGuire, isn't it?"

"Yes, sir. Just the same as yesterday."

"Do you live in Portage?"

"Yes, sir. I still live there."

"Is the older man with you, your employer?"

"Not exactly. He works for the Valley Electric Traction Co. I mean,—I mean,—when he works," said Pat, as if he had spoken too hastily, "but he is not working now," and here Pat gave evidence of trying to explain something away. "He is out for pleasure now, sir."

A light came into Mr. Green's eye. So this survey was for the Traction Co. What did this mean?

"Did you come here on the morning train, Patrick?" asked Mr. Green.

"Yes, sir. You can get into Cleveland sev-

eral times a day, can't ye, sir, by the train?"

"Yes, indeed. Gedup," and Mr. Green let the whip fall on the horse's back. This produced no result whatever.

"It will be fine when you can get to Cleveland once an hour," reflected Pat, as if thinking aloud, and then, suddenly, as if realizing he had revealed a secret, "but trains will never run as often as that, so I guess you will have to be satisfied," and Pat gave a glance at Mr. Green, as if he had made a fine recovery from his apparent mistake.

Mr. Green, thinking that Pat was well on the way to tell all he knew, said but little. They got off the wagon at the store, and Pat selected his ball of twine. As he drew the money from his pocket to pay for it, a bit of paper came with it and fell to the floor. Pat paid no attention. He wandered to the back of the store where he had stood trial the day before.

Mr. Green, now very pleasant, offered him some candy which Pat accepted. Strolling along by the counter, Mr. Green suddenly stooped and picked up the paper.

He gave one glance at it and hastily put it in his pocket. Pat very soon said "Good bye," and went back to the others.

Mr. Green, when Pat had gone, sat in the chair by the stove and looked long and hard at

the paper. It was a little diagram showing Cleveland, Plainville, a few other villages, and Portage. A line was traced from Cleveland to Portage, passing through Plainville. On the bottom of the sheet, were merely the initials V. E. T. Co.

"That's the Valley Traction Co.," exclaimed Mr. Green, with rising interest. "They are surveying for a line through Plainville, sure as fate."

His jaws set, and a hard look of intense determination came into his face.

"That means that every foot of property here will double in value." Here Mr. Green walked rapidly to the rear of the store, opened a door into the living apartments, and called:

"Mandy, Mandy, you watch the store. I am going out for an hour." So saying, he took a roll of bills from the safe and left the store. His way led to the home of Mr. Hatch. As he walked he thought rapidly. Mr. Hatch was in his yard, as Mr. Green approached.

"Good morning, Mr. Hatch," and his pleasant greeting was quite in contrast with his recent behavior. "Have you a moment to spare?"

"Certainly, Mr. Green."

"I have been thinking over that bit of land yonder. I guess that I ought to buy that land. Do you still feel like selling?"

"Of course."

"What will you take, cash down?"

Now Mr. Hatch knew Mr. Green, and he thought that he had better name a price somewhat higher than he would accept in the end, so that he might "dicker" if necessary.

"I'll take six hundred dollars, *now*, Mr. Green."

When Mr. Hatch said "now," Mr. Green gave him a sharp glance. Did he know of the proposed electric line? If he did, he was offering the land at a small valuation. He must need the money. Mr. Green knew that others would willingly give six hundred dollars when the news leaked out. The land was worth at least five hundred dollars even now.

"I'll buy it!" exclaimed the grocer, to the astonished Mr. Hatch. "Come over to the Squire's."

Too bewildered over the transaction to talk, and rejoicing over his good fortune, Mr. Hatch went to the Squire's, where he signed a land contract with Mr. Green and received six hundred dollars from him.

In the meantime Pat went back to the others. They drew nearer to the village, and sat under a tree where they could see Mr. Green's store. When Mr. Green emerged and hurried along to Mr. Hatch's home, the boys laughed with de-

light. They watched the two men go to the Squire's office. When Pat saw Mr. Hatch leave the Squire's and return to his house, he could restrain himself no longer. He made a dash down the street and into the yard. There was Mr. Hatch solemnly counting over his money.

"Ah, it's my friend Patrick McGuire. You see a happy man here. I have just sold my lot for six hundred dollars."

Pat gave a great shout and hurled his cap into the air. It was too good to be true. He shook hands with Mr. Hatch and congratulated him. It was with difficulty that he restrained himself from telling the whole story. All he said was:

"Please come around to the store about eleven, Mr. Hatch. I want you to meet another friend of mine."

Pat then hurried back to the surveyors. At ten o'clock they went again to the edge of the village and Ralph set up his instruments.

In the meantime, Mr. Green could not keep the news. He astonished several of the villagers who had gathered about the store, with the statement:

"Do you know that they are surveying for an electric line through Plainville?"

An explosion would not have produced a greater sensation. The news spread rapidly. It even reached Mr. Hatch, who was more per-

plexed than ever. He realized that if that were true, he had sold his land very cheap. He talked the matter over with the Squire, and it was not long before the village knew that Mr. Green had been indulging in sharp practice in buying the lot. He had learned of the line before Mr. Hatch knew anything about it.

When the surveyors appeared at the lower end of the street near the station, there was a mild sensation. A curious group followed them as they worked.

"We will take the railroad track as the new base, Pat."

Pat put the reading rod on the track and Ralph went about two hundred feet with the transit. Quickly he leveled it and sighting the rod, motioned Pat to raise the target. When it was properly adjusted, he called out:

"What's the reading?"

"Six feet, four inches."

"Put that down, Dick. Back-sight six feet four inches."

Pat then ran past the transit to a point two hundred feet beyond. Resting the reading rod on a stone, he waited. Ralph quickly swung the transit and sighted.

"There. What's the reading?"

"One foot, two inches."

"Fore-sight one foot, two inches, Dick."

As if thinking aloud, Ralph made the calculations:

"Elevation of track from Cleveland datum, 421 feet, plus back sight 6 feet 4 inches equals 427 feet 4 inches minus fore sight 1 foot 2 inches equals 426 feet 2 inches. New datum is 426 feet 2 inches, Dick."

Dick made the entry. Ralph then carried the instrument about three hundred feet past the reading rod. This brought him in front of Mr. Green's store. Ralph called Pat to him and together they looked over the figures. The crowd gathered closer and questions began to fly. Everyone was in good humor, but there was an undercurrent of feeling against Mr. Green.

Finally the Squire began to ask questions.

"You are the boys who were here yesterday charged with mischief?"

"Yes, sir."

Mr. Green interposed, "It's all right about that, Squire. Patrick cleared himself."

The Squire paid no attention. "We folks here think mighty kindly of you two young men. Would you mind telling us a little of what you are doing here?"

"Not at all," answered Pat, "but as we are here on Mr. Green's property, would he not like to tell you himself?"

Mr. Green felt at once his importance. He

cleared his throat, glanced about the circle, and began:

"Neighbors, I am glad to say that the coming of these young men means that Plainville is about to enter into a period of prosperity. We are to have one of the greatest of blessings in a rural community, an electric line. Today these skilled surveyors are plotting the way through this thoroughfare. I have reliable information that they represent the Valley Electric Traction Co. I congratulate you on the enterprise."

There was slight clapping of hands. But Mr. Green was not in favor. The Squire turned to Pat.

"Can you confirm this statement, McGuire?"

Pat gave a hasty look about. He saw suspicion in many a face, and knew that the crowd was prepared for a disappointment. Mr. Hatch was watching him closely.

"Gentlemen of Plainville. Ye can never tell how an innocent amusement may be misconstrued. My friend here," pointing to Ralph, "is in the employ of the Traction Co., but he is on his vacation. Taking pity on the ignorance of us two boys, he planned a day's outing for us, with a little practice in surveying. Having had such a warm welcome in your village yesterday, we thought it would be a pleasure to come again. We know absolutely nothing about an electric

line, but we would be glad to use our influence to help ye get one. Thank ye."

There was a great uproar. Mr. Green made an angry move toward the boys but was restrained by many hands.

At last Mr. Hatch made himself heard.

"I wish to say, friends, that I knew nothing of these boys being here today until after I sold my land."

"That's all right, Hatch," came a dozen voices, "we know you."

"Young man," said the Squire gravely to Pat, "you live in Portage. I think I know your father. What business is he in?"

"The real estate business, sir. But we must go. We return by this train."

Escorted by the whole group except Mr. Green, the boys went to the train and were soon in camp. They kept their story to themselves.

The next day a wagon loaded with apples, potatoes, and every conceivable supply, arrived in camp, and Mr. Hatch was driving.

CHAPTER XXIII.

BUILDING THE MONUMENT.



On Wednesday morning Mr. Kinsman addressed the boys at inspection, and told them how pleased he had been to take them to camp.

"It seems too bad for us to leave this delightful spot without placing here some permanent monument that will mark the location of our camp.

In order to carry out this idea, the Wardens have made preparation. We ordered from Portage on Saturday materials necessary to build such a monument. Mr. Winter has gone to the station and he will bring them here. We have decided to build upon the hillside a large cross made from the boulders, of which there are so many in the bed of this creek. We shall ask the help of each boy in this project. Under the direction of Mr. Jackson, each boy will carry five boulders to a spot

indicated; further work will be done when Mr. Winter arrives."

It was not long before the hillside was a scene of busy activity. Each boy was faithfully doing his part of the work; boulders of all colors, shapes and sizes were soon being hauled from their long resting place in the creek bed, to a rapidly growing pile fifty feet up the hillside. In the meantime, Mr. Jackson had detailed four boys to dig a hole, and two others to go to the neighboring woods and select a straight young sapling three or four inches in diameter. They were to cut it and bring it to the camp. Scarcely had they completed their tasks when Mr. Winter drove in. Upon his wagon were four large sacks of Portland cement and three iron bars, five feet long. The rest of the wagon bed was filled with white, sharp sand which he had been able to secure somewhere in the neighborhood.

As Mr. Winter could not cross the creek with his horse and wagon, it became at once a problem how to carry the heavy bags of Portland cement to the place where they were needed.

The boys were struggling with the heavy sacks, unable to get a firm hold upon them, when Pat McGuire rushed up with a look of disdain on his face.

"What babies you are when it comes to work. You fellows don't know enough about machinery



"IT WAS NOT LONG BEFORE THE HILLSIDE WAS A SCENE OF BUSY ACTIVITY"

to run a wheelbarrow. If you give me permission, Mr. Jackson, I will see that those sacks get over to the hillside without loss of life or limb to either sack or boy."

Mr. Jackson nodded, and Pat called out, "Ho! Red Cross Squad, man injured."

The squad, true to its training, dashed for the stretcher and the medicine chest. Rushing up to Pat, they prepared to take care of the injured man. Pat laughed and said, "Now you are going to do something useful for the first time in your young lives. Place these sacks one at a time upon your stretcher and carry them over to that hole," and he pointed up the hill.

The boys caught the idea with a rush, and soon the faithful Red Cross Squad was toiling up the hill bearing upon its stretcher a sack of Portland cement.

"You don't need the medicine chest, do you, Pat?" asked Happy Potter.

"Yes," replied Pat, "we do. Give each of these unthinking youths a dose of ginger; they will need it if they are ever to complete this work before we break camp," and Pat laughingly reported to Mr. Jackson that he had made ample transportation facilities.

But the sand yet remained on the wagon. Pat overcame this difficulty also, by borrowing a

couple of pails from Blewie, and compelling each boy to carry at least one pailful.

The actual work of building the monument now began.

The Wardens found it necessary to direct this themselves. First the sapling was firmly planted in the middle of the hole and large boulders were placed about it, holding it securely in position. The hole was completely filled with these stones. One sack of cement was opened upon a few old boards and was mixed with the sand. This mixture was placed in a box, borrowed from Blewie's kitchen, and water from the creek was added. After it had been thoroughly worked, it was poured upon the foundation stones until every crevice was filled with the cement. Thus the base for the monument was secured.

The sapling projecting about eight feet from this base was to be the guiding line about which the monument would really arise.

It was now dinner time and the hungry boys needed no second signal to stop work. It was thought advisable to postpone further building operations until later in the day so that the cement might set.

In the afternoon the boys had their sham battle as usual and then went swimming. Upon their return to camp, the Wardens asked the of-

ficers for an hour's help. Soon the Captain and his lieutenants were mixing cement and carrying water. Very carefully now the lower arm of the cross began to rise upon the firm foundation base. It was about two and one-half feet broad at the base and about eighteen inches deep. It was built about the sapling, entirely concealing it. The stones were set with great care, and mortar was freely used to hold them in place. The monument tapered slightly as it rose, becoming narrower toward the top. When the arm had reached the height of five feet they stopped. It was necessary to allow the cement to harden before further progress could be made.

As the camp was now in its closing days, it was thought desirable to allow a little more liberty, and a great party had been arranged in Mr. Winter's splendid barn.

After supper all the boys, with the exception of the unfortunate guard, made their way to the barn for the evening frolic. All the guests were there and several young ladies also, whom Mr. Kinsman had invited at Mr. Winter's suggestion, from the neighboring farm houses. The frolic began with the "Virginia Reel," in which the older members of the party joined, Mr. Hoyt leading with Mrs. Marshall.

After this had come to a close, amidst much applause, Mr. Winter struck up a lively tune

and the young people danced. Both Pat McGuire and Joe Russell reached Miss Elsie Seymour at the same moment. Those about watched with interest to see which one would be the successful candidate for the first dance with Elsie. The usually nimble witted Pat for this one time faltered. Thinking to make a favorable impression, he preceded his request with a low bow, his hand upon his heart. The more direct Joe, seeing his advantage, said quietly, "May I have this dance?" just as Pat's red head had reached the lowest point on its journey toward the floor. Consequently Elsie was saved from the embarrassment of making the choice between the two. Pat raised himself, the words of request upon his lips, only to realize that Joe had outwitted him. Pat noticed the look of amusement on the faces of those standing about, and recovering himself quickly, he said:

"In order to be forehanded, Miss Elsie, I have come to ask for the pleasure of the dance *after* this one."

Elsie cordially promised it and Pat with an air of triumph as if he had really accomplished his original purpose made off to find another partner if possible. He was fortunate enough to secure one of the guests from the neighborhood, a very attractive girl named Margaret

Stockton. Margaret was interesting and vivacious. She had traveled extensively and entertained not only Pat but the older members of the party by her experiences. Some two hours passed gaily. Never were girls in greater demand.

Finally Mr. Kinsman gave the signal to Mr. Winter, and the faithful orchestra ceased its labors. The whole company now sat down in a great circle upon the barn floor. Mr. Hoyt and Mr. Winter disappeared but in a few minutes returned, bearing a huge freezer of ice cream which Mr. Hoyt had ordered from Cleveland. Plates of cake were brought from the kitchen. This was Mrs. Winter's treat to the boys in appreciation of their assistance the week before.

Mr. Hoyt was as usual the life of the party. After all had eaten he stood at one edge of the circle prepared to make a speech. "Ladies and gentlemen, never since the beginning of time, since ancient Rome was founded upon its seven hills has a more congenial company gathered under one roof, than this party of brave lads and fair maidens, assembled here tonight. Under the arching dome of star spangled night, (at this Mr. Hoyt turned to Mr. Jackson and said: 'that's pretty good, isn't it') under the arch of the rising moon whose gleaming rays

will soon light us on our homeward way, we rejoice that we are permitted to be comrades and that we have formed friendships which will endure."

Here Mr. Hoyt nudged Mr. Jackson and winked at the others at the same time.

"As we soon shall separate and go each to his duties, my earnest wish is that next year upon these same rolling meadows and on these same beautiful hills we may all meet again."

Here Mr. Hoyt gave a sweeping wave of his hand, made a profound bow and sat down.

It seemed fitting that someone should answer for the camp. Mr. Kinsman looked at Mr. Sumner, and Mr. Sumner passed on the look to Mr. Jackson. Finally a voice from the circle called "Pat!" The cry was at once taken up and the embarrassed Pat was almost forced to his feet.

"Ladies and gentlemen," began Pat, "I cannot put my thoughts into those magnificent words that Mr. Hoyt has used. We are grateful that he came here with his wife, his daughters, and his nieces, (and Pat bowed to each in turn, bestowing the last bow upon Elsie) to give a touch of beauty amidst so much ugliness (and here Pat waved his hand toward Joe). I hope we may meet again, all together or singly, especially the latter."

Here the applause was so great that Pat sat down in confusion.

"What a beautiful sunset glow Pat's hair sheds over his face," was Joe's only retort when he could be heard.

The party soon broke up, the boys going to their camp, jubilant over their evening's fun.

The next day they resumed building operations on the monument. The three heavy irons which Mr. Winter had brought were now placed across the upright arm as a support for the transverse bar of the cross. They easily sustained the weight of the heavy boulders that were placed upon them. This arm of the cross was made about eighteen inches high. After this was done work was resumed on building the upper arm of the cross. Finally the last stone was laid and the cross was complete. The central one of the three stones which capped the cross rested directly upon the top of the sapling. By good fortune it was found to be of graceful proportions and the boys gazed upon it with great pride.

The same afternoon the formal ceremony of dedication took place. The whole company, in full uniform, gathered about the cross. The flag was saluted—then the cross, and Mr. Kinsman made a short address: "The permanent monument of Camp Crusader! May it long stand

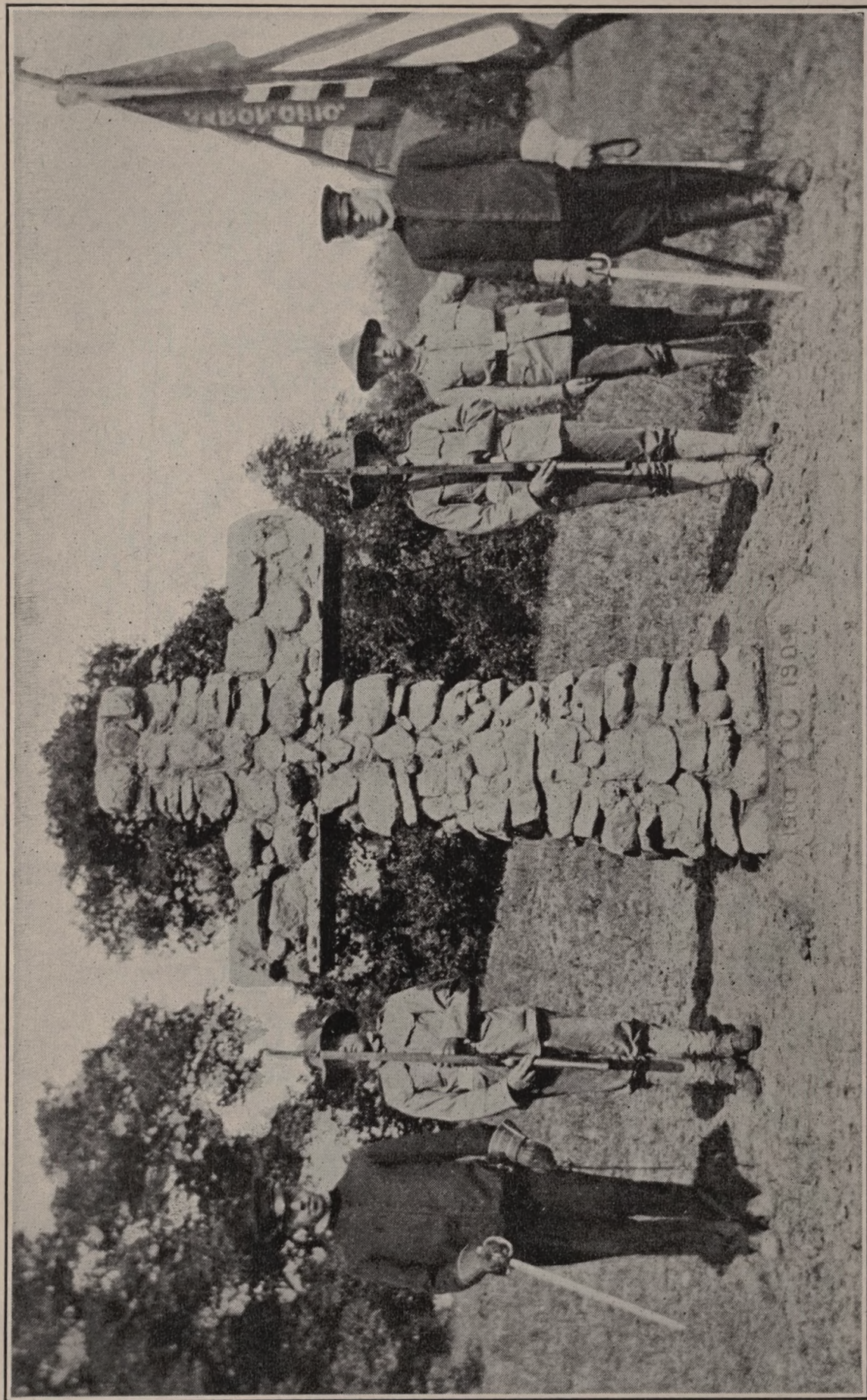
to recall the glory of the days spent beneath the protecting hills, in the quiet valley."

The night was another of those glorious moonlight nights of June, which tempt men to remain out of doors and with quiet rejoicing revel in the fascinations of lights and shadows, which transform every familiar object.

The Wardens were under the spell of the magic mantle woven by the moon's golden beams upon hill and forest. They stayed up very late to enjoy the last nights of camp. For the moon rose late. They sat upon the hillside above the white tents and talked of the boys, over whose lives they had had control for two weeks.

"Boys are worth while, Frank," said Mr. Kinsman, addressing Mr. Sumner. "They have that quality of responsiveness that is so charming in men and women. They do not show it in the same fashion. It appears in their acts rather than in their words."

"You are right, John," was Mr. Sumner's quiet reply. "They have an existence as yet undisturbed by the cares of the world, and their whole being is absorbed in the affairs of the moment. That picket is not indulging in a pastime, or merely following a routine. He is guarding a camp. It is a serious business and he



"THE MONUMENT OF CAMP CRUSADER. LONG MAY IT STAND TO RECALL THE GLORY
OF THE DAYS SPENT BENEATH THE PROTECTING HILLS IN THE QUIET VALLEY"

knows it. Boys do not show their feelings very much, but they are deep and they will last."

Mr. Jackson sat silently gazing at the camp. After a moment he said, "We may think that we are doing this for the boys. How about ourselves? Has there been a minute which we have not enjoyed? Has it not been a pleasure to have shared in such an experience as this has been? Tomorrow night this little spot will be nearly as it has been for scores of years, silent, and deserted. But who can tell what forces have here been set in motion for the good of these boys, impressing the lesson of obedience and uprightness, and mutual help. As for myself I shall think of this place, with a pleasure that will not fade. And I believe those old trees and hillsides will somehow always seem unlike other trees and hillsides, because they have been taken into a human brotherhood, and have served a human purpose in bringing pleasure to us all."

It was with hearts full of sober joy that late that night the Wardens returned to their tents.

CHAPTER XXIV.

BREAKING CAMP.



Saturday morning was the time set for breaking camp. On Friday, there appeared an important looking gentleman who inquired for Mr. Kinsman. He was recognized at once as the Mayor of Portage. He explained that he had come to present the formal thanks of the city of Portage to

the Young Crusaders for their skillful help, during the fire at the Tennant Building.

The company was assembled and the Mayor made a speech and finally brought out a large silver medallion mounted on wood. The medallion had a suitable inscription engraved on it. The Mayor asked that it be hung in the meeting room of the Young Crusaders.

Mr. Kinsman responded with a short speech. The Mayor remained to witness the usual sham battle.

During the afternoon was held the drill on the manual of arms for the prize offered by the Wardens. Mr. Hoyt and the Mayor acted as judges. Hamilton, who had lost some of his confidence and had worked faithfully, won the prize. This was a small medal.

The last night in camp was a joyous one. Games and races and singing enlisted the energy of most of the boys. The bonfire was built high for all the empty boxes in the kitchen were used as fuel.

The young ladies, in fact, all the guests, visited the camp as usual, and more stories were told.

Early the following morning they began preparations for leaving. Each boy was told to pack his clothing, bedding and all personal effects. The cots were carried one by one to a spot where the wagons were to be loaded. The boxes followed. Blewie prepared a last meal and set it upon the table. It was a cold lunch. A platoon of boys then attacked the kitchen and soon the stove and utensils were alongside the cots and boxes. Headquarters came next.

About noon the wagons arrived on the scene. After lunch the loading began. The tents were still standing. When one wagon was loaded the company was assembled and instructions were given. Each boy then went to his

proper tent. The ropes were loosed and held by the boys.

At a signal given on the bugle, they released the tent ropes and the white city, their home for over two weeks, shrank to the ground. It gave them all a sense of desolation to see the emptiness of the camp street where they had spent so many happy hours.

The tents were soon folded and put into the tent bags; the stakes drawn and the poles tied in bundles. Everything was loaded on the wagons.

There remained but little to do. The company was formed in a long line and it swept across the camp site, picking up every scrap of paper, every bit of wood and every discarded article of any sort. These were placed on the bonfire.

The company then took farewell of Mr. Hoyt and his party, who were planning to return to Cleveland the same afternoon in the automobile.

All were cordially invited to visit the Hoyts in Cleveland. Mr. Jackson was asked by Miss Marion when he expected to begin digging on the old farm.

"Right away, but if I meet with no success, I may start to dig in Cleveland. May I have your permission to go there and search for my treasure?"

Marion's reply was heard by no one but Mr. Jackson. It is to be assumed that permission was granted for he did go to Cleveland the following week, and later the report came that he had found what he sought.

When Joe and Pat put on their coats to prepare to go to the train, it was seen that a button was missing from each coat, and in Elsie's little purse two buttons reposed side by side.

The company was formed on the camp site for the last time and a final salute was fired. Through the shady grove and over the dusty road the company marched to the station.

Pat stepped up to the agent.

"Would ye take a telegram?"

"Certainly," said the agent. Pat wrote it carefully and signed his full name.

"Mrs. Michael McGuire, Portage.—Look out for a soldier in full uniform and hungry.

"Patrick Terence O'Neil McGuire."

The agent gave one look at the name.

"Are you that there boy that sent some rubbish about veg'tables over this wire the day you came?"

"Perhaps I am," was Pat's answer.

The agent gave him one long look and shook his head.

"Young man, you do be the genuine specimen of the disadvantages of iddicashun," and he closed the office window.

The sun-burned boys created the same comment on the train as on the trip to camp. As the train approached Portage the young soldiers realized how eager they were to get home and relate their exploits. There was quite a group of friends at the station, to meet them. They formed and quickly marched to the High School yard and after the Wardens had complimented them on their loyalty, Captain Warren said but a single word,

"Dismissed."

Camp Crusader had come to an end.

* * * * *

Tom and Joe walked home together, arm in arm.

"Tom," began Joe, "come around to Uncle Russell's Monday morning. I have an idea."

"You are so full of ideas, Joe, that you are in danger of bursting," laughed Tom.

"Never you mind. This is a good one."

"What is it? Not a submarine boat, or a wireless piano player, or anything of that sort, I hope."

"You will see. Come over early."

That evening Colonel Russell entertained a

party at dinner. Mr. Kinsman and his mother, Mrs. Marshall and Anna, Mr. Sumner and Mr. Jackson were there. There was much conversation about the camp and its incidents.

Colonel Russell at length said, "I have made every arrangement, Mr. Kinsman, for you to claim what rightfully belongs to you."

"I have already done so, Colonel Russell," said Mr. Kinsman, taking Anna by the hand, "and I shall take possession next month."

After congratulations had been offered, Colonel Russell proceeded.

"You will find that your fortune has grown, by accrued interest. It is much larger than your book shows. But I hope you will remain in our High School."

"I shall," was Mr. Kinsman's firm answer. "I am too much interested in the Young Crusaders to leave Portage now."

And Anna Marshall, whose radiant beauty this night impressed all who saw her, gave him a look of gratitude, saying simply:

"I am very glad we are to remain here among such good friends."

Colonel Russell continued: "I am to speak at our Chamber of Commerce banquet tomorrow night, and I shall take occasion to mention the Young Crusaders."

"You are to read a poem there, I believe,

Colonel," said Anna, with an appealing look. "Would you not let us hear it now?"

The Colonel was visibly embarrassed, but no one was able to resist when Anna asked a favor. He went to the library and returned with a small sheet of paper. Standing at the head of the table he began:

"I have only once or twice in my life permitted myself to indulge in the luxury of writing verses, and then only when prompted by a worthy subject and under deep emotion. But I accepted this task, and you shall hear the meager result. It is an ode to Portage." The Colonel then read:

"Our Father's blessings free
Have been bestowed on thee,
Portage, our pride;
Thy beauty never fails,
Shrined midst thy hills and vales;
O'er thee sweet peace prevails
On every side.

"Wisdom, power, charity
Mould thy prosperity,
Portage, our pride;
Thy labors here give birth,
To gifts for all the earth,
Sounding the people's worth
Who here abide.

“God bless our mighty men,
Give each the strength of ten,
Portage our pride;
Preserve our liberty,
Honor, integrity,
Then shall praise be to Thee
Great God, our Guide.

“And now,” continued the Colonel, when he had finished, “we shall have some music.”

They went to the library, and there spent a merry evening with songs and stories. Anna was persuaded to play and the beautiful strains of the “Overture” from William Tell gave evidence of her skill. At midnight the Colonel bade his guests “Goodnight,” and the pleasant party came to an end.

When Tom reached Joe’s attic retreat on Monday, he found Joe studying again over the parchment.

“Tom, did it ever occur to you that we stopped digging when we found the box?”

“Well, I never! Did you expect to find a whole warehouse, Joe?”

“Oh, I guess we found all there was. It looks pretty simple now, doesn’t it?”

“Yes, and you’ll look simple, too, Joe, if you ever start digging around that tree for more boxes.”

Joe put up his paper. He hesitated a moment, and then seizing Tom, he exclaimed:

"Sit right down here. I want to tell you my great idea."

But Joe's great idea is another story.



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